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The Students' Series of English Classics.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WRITINGS OF JOHN RUSKIN.

BY

VIDA D. SCUDDER, M.A.
WELLESLEY COLLEGE.

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PREFACE.

This selection from Ruskin's writings is intended primarily for the use of students: students whether in the school, the college, or the great University of the World. There are many volumes of passages from Ruskin chosen for their beauty, or for their bearing on some special theme: it is believed that no collection has existed which aimed to present a suggestive summary of all the varying phases of his work, and to initiate the serious student into the most valuable portions of his thought. Yet there is perhaps no author more helpful, not only for the intrinsic beauty and value of his writings, but for his vital relation to the most interesting parts of the life of the century. And, if the function of the middleman is ever legitimate in literature, it is surely legitimate in the case of a writer like Ruskin; for the very voluminousness of his works stands between him and popular knowledge.

The principles by which the selections have been chosen are, first, to find passages fairly typical of Ruskin's most characteristic modes of thought and to

place them, in just proportion, under clearly defined heads: second, to represent as many of his books as possible: third, to avoid, so far as consistent with the other two principles, passages hackneyed from use in other collections. The text of the book has been carefully corrected, sentence by sentence, by Ruskin's authorized English edition, and it is hoped that few errors will be found.

Volumes of selections are poor things at best, yet they too may have their place if they make manifest beauty, suggest wealth of thought, and stimulate the reader to seek the greater intimacy of the writer. Such volumes serve the part of introductions in society: and so this little book would ask to be considered simply as an introduction to a man whose more intimate friendship is a privilege which may well be sought.

VIDA D. SCUDDER.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE, October, 1890.

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INTRODUCTION.

I.

JOHN RUSKIN IN HIS CENTURY.

No man is a wider exponent of the life and thought of the nineteenth century than John Ruskin. Other men are greater, stronger in thought, more balanced in character, mightier in creative power; but no one has turned upon the complex modern world a nature more keen in appreciative insight, more many-sided, sensitive, and pure. Two writers, Browning and Carlyle, will be recognized by the twentieth century as prophets of the age that is passing away. Their message has rung like a trumpet-call through the years. Two others, Tennyson and Ruskin, will be recognized as interpreters. All shifting phases of thought, passion, problem, and faith have been reflected and preserved by spiritual alchemy in the polished mirrors of their souls.

In 1819, the same year which saw the birth of Ruskin, a girl-baby in Warwickshire began to absorb that perception of rural English beauty which was to be shared with all the world through the pages of "Adam Bede" and "The Mill on the Floss." George Eliot and Ruskin

are exact contemporaries. The England into which they were born was the old-fashioned England of stage-coaches and gentle leisure. Railroads and telegraphs were unknown, and the change from the old order to an industrial and mechanical civilization was not yet completed. Politically it was a time of outward pause; the excitement of the French Revolution had passed away, yet the great outburst of song which had heralded and accompanied the Revolution still echoed in men's ears. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Keats, were still living, but a few short years were all the younger men were to see on earth, while in Wordsworth and Coleridge the poet, though not the man, had died. Scott was the hero of the hour. "Waverley" had been published in 1816, and the English public was carried away, through Ruskin's childhood, by the enthusiasm of the great romantic movement which Ruskin himself was to do so much to enlarge and to direct. Tennyson and Browning were little boys of ten and seven. Far north, in Scotland, a Scottish youth, rough, uncouth, unhappy, was garnering, in the tumult of dark spiritual experience and of external hardship, the bitter yet tender wisdom which was to fling itself in fruitful words on the pages of "Sartor Resartus."

Of struggles, inward or outward, the little Ruskin knew but few. Only son of a rich wine-merchant, the sheltered simplicity of his life had little in common with such rough training as strengthened the sturdy fibres of the Scottish peasant. Yet in one teaching the cottage at Ecclefechan and the villa at Herne Hill were

agreed. Chapter by chapter, verse by verse, the little boy, like Carlyle before him, read the Bible over and over before his strict and devoted mother. Always reverent and docile in temperament, he seems to have followed with entire obedience, if sometimes with weariness, her minutely rigid method. Many long passages were learned by rote if not by heart, till his whole nature became steeped in the language and spirit of that mighty book which has for centuries nurtured the noblest English souls. "And truly," he says, "though I have picked up the elements of a little further knowledge in mathematics, meteorology, and the like, in after life, and owe not a little to the teaching of other people, this maternal installation of my mind in that property of chapters I count very confidently the most precious, and, on the whole, the one essential part of all my education."

Apart from the Bible, Ruskin's chief early reading was in Homer, Scott, and Byron, all of whom he still loves with fidelity unshaken. Yet that gradual awakening of the spirit within, which we call education, came to him less through the mind than through the eye. From the time he was four years old the family lived out of town, and in a large, old-fashioned, sweet garden the child spent most of his time, contented and solitary, learning to observe and to receive. In the summers the family took the most delightful of vacations, driving in leisurely fashion through England, Scotland, and later Switzerland. These journeys opened to the lad a fairy-land of wonders. From babyhood he had been raptur-

ously alive to beauty, like Wordsworth's child in the famous ode. When he was only three years old, and was asked by a portrait painter what background he would like in the picture of his little self, he had decidedly and swiftly answered, "blue hills." Such a nature, passionately contemplative, was enriched to the utmost by the absorption in early youth of much of the noblest and loveliest, both in art and nature, that Europe could furnish. When he was twelve years old a friend gave him Rogers's Italy with illustrations by Turner. Immediately there sprang up within him that profound and ardent discipleship which was to form the constraining loyalty of twenty years of his life. Thus his quiet childhood slipped into youth, the love of art — architecture and painting — and the passion for poetry being supplemented in a way perhaps somewhat unusual by a strong bent towards scientific study. Ruskin himself sums up his early life for us: "For best and truest beginning of all blessings, I had been taught the perfect meaning of peace, in thought, act, and word. . . . Next to this quite priceless gift of peace, I had received the perfect understanding of the natures of obedience and faith: . . . these three for chief good; next to these, the habit of fixed attention with both eyes and mind — on which I will not further enlarge at this moment, this being the main practical faculty of my life."

In 1836 he went to Oxford, and was entered at Christ Church, the richest and most aristocratic of the colleges, as a gentleman commoner. The stern old city with its austere grace laid its spell upon him, and he entered

with some earnestness into the life, social and literary, of the best English youth. But his great enthusiasm was still for art, and for Turner's pictures. In time this enthusiasm assumed the form of indignant championship. Turner was unquestionably the greatest landscape painter that the world had seen, but his works were hard to understand from their very novelty of method; and, though not without recognition, he was at this time attacked and ridiculed in some of the leading reviews. Ruskin, with impetuous chivalry, hastened to defend him in a letter to a magazine. As he wrote, ideas pressed upon him: the letter grew to a pamphlet. Still he found himself "compelled" to "amplify," and when at last he paused, it was to find completed an entire book, inquiring into the true principles of painting, and defending modern art. This was the first volume of "Modern Painters," given to the world in 1843.

Ruskin was at this time twenty-four years old. His nature was ardently attuned to all high things. He had entered into the richest heritage that life could offer, with one great exception — he had never known struggle, and he had never known serious pain. Full of high possibilities he thus had still the immaturity of the eager boy. But henceforth his growth was to be before the public, and this fact may account for much seeming weakness and inconsistency. Carlyle was thirty-nine before he reached any general recognition. George Eliot at thirty-six had given nothing to the world. But Ruskin shared with the British public the freshness and the crudity of his first impressions, and from this

time his growth and change may be traced unfailingly through the long sequence of his famous books.

"Modern Painters," this first volume, was received with derision by the art critics, with amazed applause by the public. Thus, almost by chance, the direction of Ruskin's energies was determined. He professes himself to regret that he has not been a geologist. With the large views of youth he had planned the work on a scale which required many volumes for its completion. The second volume followed in 1846. Then Turner passed to where beyond these voices there is peace. Neither abuse nor honour could touch him longer, and with a more sober devotion his young champion studied slowly for many years before he gave to the world the fruits of his riper thought. It was not till 1860 that Volume V. closed the long series, which, beginning with a defence of an individual artist, had extended to a broad historical and comparative study of art, ancient and modern, and had contained at least the suggestions of the theory of æsthetics which has proved most genuinely and practically attractive through the century. The first part of the work is marked by the enthusiasm of youth, by an intense, unquestioning, narrow evangelicalism; by a devout adoration of beauty. The latter volumes, increasingly sad in tone, show swift growth in breadth, moderation, and in philosophical and analytic power.

During these twenty years Ruskin was loved and honoured throughout England as the chief interpreter of beauty in nature and in art. His works were reverently

studied as a great educational power. The attitude towards art of the specialist was changed by his teaching, and the apathetic public was aroused to a new and intelligent æsthetic life. Ruskin's energies as an art critic were not confined to "Modern Painters." Two other great works, the "Stones of Venice" and the "Seven Lamps of Architecture," gave a vividly sympathetic exposition of Gothic architecture in its principles and history; while many minor works, devoted to the one end of the interpretation of art in its purity and its truthfulness, bore witness to an unceasing devotion of work. But a change was coming. Even while he was absorbed in the contemplation of Italian masters or the glories of the Alps, another force, mighty and insistent, was drawing the soul of Ruskin away from the service of nature and art. It was the voice of the modern world. It summoned him from the study of beauty to the need of humanity. He obeyed the call. The interpreter of art became the social reformer. Since 1860 the chief interest of Mr. Ruskin's life has been the effort to understand and solve the problems of human sorrow and human need.

No stranger transition is recorded in history than this which has turned the philosophical student of art into the vehement teacher of political economy. Mr. Ruskin was brought up, as we have seen, in the most conservative of homes and the most conservative of universities. His temperament was receptive rather than aggressive, attuned to the love of beauty and the pursuit of abstractions, rather than to the apprehension of practical

facts. No personal grievance drove him into rebellion: he was wealthy, and every refinement of fair living was within his reach. It is easy to see why a man like Carlyle should have become a social prophet: race sympathy and severe personal experience reacted from without on an inner nature militant and practical to the core. But that a Ruskin, with his ignorance of struggle, and his happy, instinctive contentment in leaves and pictures and cathedrals, should deliberately have entered the rough, hot, wearisome sphere of economic struggle is a phenomenon perplexing indeed.

Reasons for the change are clear to the thoughtful mind. Ruskin and Carlyle start from opposite poles; but both arrive at the same centre. And this because of that essential unity of life which forces artist and philosopher, fighter and dreamer, to remain alike restless, and seeking, each dissatisfied with his own sphere of energy, so long as disease in any part of the vast human organism affects and vitiates the whole.

The year 1860 was the great watershed in Ruskin's life. Already, in the fifth volume of "Modern Painters," the change which had passed over him was obvious to the attentive mind. But two courses of lectures, published as books in this year, or somewhat earlier, "The Two Paths," and "The Political Economy of Art," mark clearly and decisively the nature and cause of the transition.

Carlyle preached social reform as the direct and necessary condition of pure living. Ruskin was driven to it in seeking for the necessary condition of pure art.

There are two central themes in these books: —

First, The growth of a purely mechanical civilization tends to shut out the possibility of original, creative achievement in art, diverting men from the free study of organic form, vulgarizing their tastes, and deadening their powers.

Second, Art can flourish only in a national life instinct with honour, beauty, justice, and peace. The wide spread of social misery renders such a national life impossible: therefore, in our modern world, true art, or, at least, great and permanent art, cannot exist. Would we have pure art once more, we must purify our social order.

Once these conclusions grasped, Ruskin turned obediently and firmly from the study of art to the study of sociology. It might be expected that he would not approach this burning subject after the conventional fashion. His next book, "Unto This Last," a treatise on the elements of political economy, was received by a chorus of angry scorn and amused pity. The editors of the "Cornhill Magazine," in which it first came out, were obliged to decline further instalments when the first four chapters had appeared; but Mr. Ruskin pursued his way undaunted. As he continued to think, and to formulate his thoughts in print, the whole attitude of the English public towards him changed. He had been loved with a peculiar tenderness of reverence: he became not so much hated as despised. Rumors against his sanity crept about, disciples and friends left him in isolation: those who still clung to him lamented his mistaken folly. Goaded to exasperation by this treatment, he never, indeed, faltered; but he began to

express himself in extreme and fantastic forms, which lent color to the accusations of his critics. A lambent humour, fantastic yet fiery, began to play through his utterances; and serious-minded Englishmen often found it impossible to say whether he were in jest or earnest. To one who has heard Mr. Ruskin lecture, the effect of his amazing and scathing invectives against modern civilization is modified by the memory of a twinkle in a keen, deep-gray eye, and an especially gentle lisp. Undoubtedly, many of his views and his way of stating them became crabbed and queer. It was through no personal desire that he entered the arena of social struggle; reluctantly, rather, and with many a wistful backward glance towards the world of calm he had left. "That it should be left to me," so he writes, "to begin such a work, with only one man in England — Thomas Carlyle — to whom I can look for steady guidance, is alike wonderful and sorrowful to me; but, as the thing is so, I can only do what seems to me necessary, none else coming forward to do it." Suggestions of Mr. Ruskin's leading principles and theories in social science will be found later in the book. Here, we can only say that his ideal for the state is a form of socialism founded not on equality but on justice and obedience. He did not entirely abandon his art-work, but it became more and more subordinate. He excited the derision of the public by various practical experiments, on a small scale: he started a tea-shop, for the sale of pure tea, which ignominiously failed, "because," as he whimsically says, "of my procrastination in painting my

sign;" he attempted to clean the Augean stables, and, for a time, hired a crossing in the dirtiest part of London kept absolutely clean; he inveigled certain young Oxford exquisites to engage with him in the wholesome manual labor of road-making, — a labor, it may be added, which they are said to have performed extremely ill. Comparison with the great Russian reformer, Tolstoï, suggests itself as we read of this phase of Mr. Ruskin's life; yet Ruskin is, on the whole, less extreme, less literal, than Tolstoï. His passion for the highest and fairest products of civilization has done much to keep him balanced and broad in his ideals. Finally, in 1871, he began his most ambitious and prolonged effort to realize his theories in practical form: an effort which, seemingly diffused and Utopian, has yet succeeded in clinging to some reality, despite the fragmentary method by which it has been carried out. He started a monthly letter, which he called by the fanciful name of Fors Clavigera, to the workmen of Great Britain. Few workmen were, it is to be feared, sufficiently exemplary or enlightened to spend their time and their money over Mr. Ruskin's obscure, if beautiful, mosaic of Scripture exposition, literary allusions, poetry, argument, and hard fact. Those who were soon found that he meant more than mere talk. The sight of the misery of the laboring classes and the evils due, as he believed, to an unrighteous competition, roused him to indignant speech and act. "For my part," he wrote, "I will put up with this state of things passively not an hour longer. I am not an unselfish person nor an evangelical one: I have

no particular pleasure in doing good, neither do I dislike doing it, so much as to expect to be rewarded for it in another world. But I simply cannot paint nor read nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky, when there is any, — which is seldom nowadays, near London, — has become hateful to me because of the misery I know of, and see signs of where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly. Therefore, as I have said, I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery."

The direct, obvious result of Ruskin's action was the formation of that Guild of St. George which will be found described later. He has himself been consistent, in deed as in word. Of the large fortune he inherited from his father he has given away eleven-twelfths; and his best energy and genius during the last twenty years have been devoted to furthering, directly or indirectly, the social cause which he has at heart. But his versatile and sympathetic nature has not confined itself to any one line of effort. In 1870, and again in 1884, he was lecturer on art in his own university; and the establishment of a School of Art in Oxford has been one of his best-loved schemes. In his charming books for girls and boys power of a different order has been manifested. Meanwhile, his swift and broad sympathies have embraced still another field. Even in his youth he showed the patient observation, the reverence for fact, which mark the scientific temperament. He has of late

years reverted to purely scientific studies, and in "Ethics of the Dust," "Deucalion," and "Proserpina," has written of mineralogy, geology, and botany in a charming way, which, though often too independent to be recognized by conventional science, yet gives incentive and suggestion to all his readers.

Truly, as was said at the beginning, the career of Ruskin is typical. His life has covered many phases, rising, falling, in swift succession. Born while Scott and Byron were supreme, he has outlived the work of Browning and of George Eliot. Born while Adam Smith was the one authority in economics, he has lived to see the school of Mill called antiquated, and swept away by a new and vivid tendency. His maturity has witnessed the rise, in some cases the full expression, of the five great movements around which have been centred the activities of the modern world. The critical movement, the scientific movement, the religious movement, the artistic movement, the social movement, — each of these has passed over him; to each his eager and delicate nature has stirred responsive. Of two of these movements he has been at the very heart. The artistic movement was largely moulded, if not originated, by his powerful genius. Concerning his place and value in the social movement it is not yet time to speak. To his work in this direction he has sacrificed his popularity, his health, and, more bitter far, his influence. Where he was revered, he is ridiculed; where he was obeyed, he is neglected. Still the battle is hot and the issue doubtful. But our judgment of the value of Mr. Ruskin's economic ideas

should not affect our profound sense of the significance of his conversion. We may condemn his theories as Utopian extravaganzas: all the more imperious must have been the stress of the impulse which drove him from the sphere in which he was master, to that in which he is unfit even to labour. It is strange indeed to find the same man prominent as an interpreter of the beautiful and a student of the dismal science of political economy: it is sad more than strange if the interpreter of beauty forfeits his own fair power to gain mere self-delusion in exchange. Ruskin's is not, as we have said, the assertive or progressive temperament. He is, by choice, no leader of his time. He has never doubted, except where doubt was forced upon him. Reverence and obedience are the instinctive watchwords of his nature. That such a man, intensely conservative in every nerve, should be relentlessly driven to a position considered by most of his contemporaries as dangerously radical, is a paradox touched with grim humour but with deeper pathos. That he should be forced by modern conditions to turn from joyous and adoring contemplation, and, Hamlet-like, to assume the burden of the times, is a fact on which we may well pause. The significance is clear: the noble sensitiveness of the man has simply felt, a little before his fellows, the new "common wave of thought" which was to "lift mankind." The change in Ruskin is the change of the century. From "Modern Painters" to "Fors Clavigera,"—this is the great transition of the age. We began the Victorian era with art: with high theoretic

enthusiasm, with romantic devotion to the past, with reverence for beauty, yet often with complacent content in our elaborate society. We end with social science: with a strenuous, practical earnestness, with consecration to human needs, with deepening humility. Beauty is not forgotten nor despised. It is ours, a precious possession forever. But it has led us to something beyond itself, — to the conception of that perfect state where alone it can be perfectly realized. It is because John Ruskin, more than any other one man in England, has felt these two influences of Art and Humanity, that we are eager to study him: it is because he has reflected them both in a nature clear, reverent, and true, and through words beautiful since sincere, that we trust our study of even a few selections from his writings to leave us richer than it found us, in thought and life.

II.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE MORE IMPORTANT WRITINGS OF JOHN RUSKIN.

THE POETRY OF ARCHITECTURE. Papers contributed to the Architectural Magazine, 1837–1839. Signed Kata Phusin.

MODERN PAINTERS. Vol. I. By a Graduate of Oxford. 1843.

MODERN PAINTERS. Vol. II. 1846.

THE SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE. By John Ruskin. 1849. (Henceforth Ruskin published under his own name.)

POEMS. Collected 1859.

THE STONES OF VENICE. 1851–1853.

NOTES ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF SHEEPFOLDS. (Concerning theories of the Church.) 1851.

LECTURES ON ARCHITECTURE. 1853.

MODERN PAINTERS. Vol. III. 1856.

MODERN PAINTERS. Vol. IV. 1856.

[1] THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ART. 1857.

THE ELEMENTS OF DRAWING. 1857.

THE TWO PATHS. Lectures on Art and its Application to Decoration and Manufacture. 1860.

MODERN PAINTERS. Vol. V. 1860.

UNTO THIS LAST. 1860.

MUNERA PULVERIS. 1863.

[1] Lectures afterwards published under the title "A Joy For Ever."

SESAME AND LILIES. 1865.

ETHICS OF THE DUST. 1865.

THE CROWN OF WILD OLIVE. 1866.

TIME AND TIDE. Twenty-five Letters to a Working-Man of Sunderland on the Laws of Work. 1867.

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR. A Study of the Greek Myths of Cloud and Storm. 1869.

LECTURES ON ART, delivered before the University of Oxford. 1870.

FORS CLAVIGERA. Monthly Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain. 1871–1878.

ARATRA PENTELICI. On the Elements of Sculpture.

THE EAGLE'S NEST. The Relation of Natural Science to Art. 1872.

ARIADNE FLORENTINA. Lectures on Engraving. 1872.

PROSERPINA. Studies of Wayside Flowers. 1876.

DEUCALION. Collected Studies of the Lapse of Waves and Life of Stones. 1878.

MORNINGS IN FLORENCE. 1877.

ST. MARK'S REST. 1877.

THE LAWS OF FESOLE. 1878.

THE ART OF ENGLAND. Oxford Lectures. 1884.

THE PLEASURES OF ENGLAND. Oxford Lectures. 1885.

OUR FATHERS HAVE TOLD US. Sketches of the History of Christendom for Boys and Girls who have been held at its Fonts. Part I. The Bible of Amiens. 1885.

PRETERITA. Scenes of my Past Life. 1887.

III.

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF RUSKIN.

Ruskin has not only been one of the most representative men of the century, he has also been one of its most potent influences. The influence, like that of all finest things, has been in great measure impalpable and elusive. The best results of his life are written in the souls he has awakened to the love of beauty and the vision of the right. Yet there are certain definite, practical changes in the attitude of the average man, which may be traced with reasonable assurance to his teaching.

At the time when Ruskin began to write, England was suffering from an invasion of ugliness. From household furnishings to ecclesiastical architecture the artistic ideal of the time was perhaps meaner than at any date before or since. One or two of the many reasons for this degradation lie on the surface. First, came the supplanting of hand-work by machinery. All through the Middle Ages, and even through the eighteenth century and the time of Queen Anne, men used themselves to build and decorate their houses and to weave their garments. But when steam power was discovered, two-thirds of the work which had been done by hand was given over to machines. For a time men fancied that nothing was worth doing which could not be accom-

plished by these wondrous automatic slaves. They were never tired of seeing how many yards of brilliant carpets, how many articles of showy furniture, could be turned out in less time than the faithful, old-fashioned hand-work would have given to one article. But really artistic or beautiful objects can only result from the personal impress of the worker on his work; and as a result of this wholesale method of production, a mechanical, gaudy, vulgarized style pervaded almost every form of industry and reacted upon the fine arts. This was one reason for the dreary dearth of true beauty; another may perhaps be found in the prevailing religious attitude of the day. Most of the people sensitive to spiritual things were then evangelicals. Now the evangelicals were in theory ascetics. Their peculiar form of faith derived obviously from the Methodists, who had been, as a rule, unlettered people, indifferent to fineness or art; by more indirect and subtle means it continued in many respects the old Puritan traditions of England. An evangelical drew a sharp distinction between the things of this world and the next; all outside a certain sphere of religious dogma and emotion was to him "vile earth" or "worldly dross." Thus he feared and despised physical beauty as a vanity, if not a dangerous temptation. The Oxford Movement (1833–1846) did something to fight against this feeling and to bring back beauty and learning to the service of the Church. But the Oxford Movement itself was tinctured with asceticism. It was ecclesiastical, not universal. It appreciated gladly the solemn glory of the cathedral where pillared nave and

burning windows shielded a ritual symbolically fair, but it was blind to the beauty of the forest and the sky.

Ruskin himself was born and bred in the evangelical religion and in the crudities of a mechanical luxury; but he was destined to counteract many of the tendencies of both. The first work which he did, or helped to do, was to recall people to the perception of true beauty, and to the faith that all beauty is the consecrated revelation of God, not to be distrusted as a dangerous snare, but to be received with reverent delight. Our great century has seen no greater change than this. Ruskin's method of interpretation was from the first singularly fearless and high. In the second volume of "Modern Painters" he sought the sources and analogues of the different elements of beauty in the Divine Nature itself, in energy, justice, infinity, moderation, permanence. "I have long believed," he writes in the "Stones of Venice," "that in whatever has been made by the Deity externally delightful to the human sense of beauty, there is some type of God's nature or of God's laws." This principle pervades not only "Modern Painters," but nearly all Mr. Ruskin's important works. Whether it be correct or no, he accomplished two ends: he vindicated the sanctity of art and beauty, and he gave to them a new zest of interest in the mind of the public. Always his treatment was human. Theories of art were then dry, formal, technical, and the world did not trouble its mind over them. Ruskin discussed art in a way that people could understand. He defended modern artists; he pleaded for the re-introduction of passion, simplicity,

truth. He gave the whole subject new life. And he succeeded in making the general public both ardent and intelligent, in awakening them, first to honour beauty, and then to pursue it. The new impulse is extending into the minutest details of practical art. If our houses are prettier than the houses of our fathers — they are not yet, alas, so pretty as those of our great-grandfathers, — the change is largely due to Mr. Ruskin. The whole movement loosely known as æstheticism goes back to his works for the inspiration of its origin, though it departs widely from him in its development. Æstheticism is absurd enough when caricatured by enemies or friends; yet it has meant on the whole a healthy return to sound principles of workmanship, and simple and graceful conditions of life.

One of the most effective ways in which Ruskin brought people back to a wholesome love of beauty was through quickening in them the love of nature, — of the fair sky above them and the fertile earth beneath. Not that such love was first preached by Ruskin. To find the pioneers of the great movement which has led men by the roads of science and of poetry back to the heart of nature and bade them rest there, we must return to the eighteenth century. During Ruskin's youth the priests of nature, Wordsworth and Shelley first and chief, were unveiling her mysteries. But they wrote in poetry, and poets and their ideas have to be translated into prose before we can be sure of their general or permanent effect. Ruskin was the first prose author of importance in whose works the loving interpretation of

nature formed a leading phase. Thus he marks in a sense the transition when this love became no longer an eccentric thing, branding the man who held it as a mystic or a fool, but a general heritage into which were to enter all gentle and right-minded people. Ruskin's studies of nature are among the most valuable, and will very likely form the most permanent portions of his books.

Several definite facts in the history of modern activity can be traced to Ruskin. One of the chief art movements of modern times is directly connected with his teaching. In 1848 a few young men, disgusted with false sublimity and cold reverence for the antique, united in a little band that called itself the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Three of them have since become famous: their names are John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Holman Hunt. They began to exhibit pictures which hurled defiance at all the accepted canons of art; pictures strange in color and drawing, bearing witness to feeling passionate and often devout, and to study of nature minutely truthful, pictures that returned in simplicity of method and spirit to the work of the early Italian painters before Raphael and the Renascence. Mr. Ruskin constituted himself the champion of these young men; they were the exponents of the principles in art for which he lived; much and eloquently he wrote in their defence. As years have passed, the movement has in some respects departed from its original character; yet it has been continued by at least two men, Burne-Jones and Watts, equal in power to its

founders, and the magnitude and unique quality of their work bear witness to the strength and vitality of the original impulse.

In one other important direction the influence of Ruskin on the art of the century cannot be ignored: in the revival of an enthusiasm for Gothic architecture. The pseudo-classic architecture which was revived in the Renascence had flourished, degenerated, and yet prevailed. The Gothic was despised as the building of barbarian rudeness, unfit for civilized respect. The re-kindling of intelligent love for Gothic may be traced to many causes; Ruskin's teaching is only one strand in the web woven also of the romantic passion for the Middle Ages illustrated by Scott, and the quickening of the Catholic spirit illustrated by Keble. But no one cause, perhaps, has done so much to give the interest in architecture a practical as well as a sentimental bent, as Ruskin's devotion.

When we pass from Ruskin's influence in art to his work in social science, we find ourselves on less certain ground. It is impossible here to attempt an estimate of the value of his achievement. The laughter of the British public counts for little. It may be conceded at once that Mr. Ruskin chooses strange titles for his books, titles poetic rather than utilitarian, tinged with a delicate, often a recondite, fancy. It is certainly hard to trust the practical good sense of a man who calls a treatise on Political Economy "Unto This Last," or "Munera Pulveris." He interweaves discussions of the law of wages with interpretations of queer Greek

myths, or with fragments of philology. Moreover, he has an inconvenient habit of constantly dragging in as witness and authority, even in the most modern and practical of discussions, the simple words of the Bible. It is no wonder that the average man eyes him askance, and talks about "Political Economy in the moon." Nevertheless, till it be proved that there can be no rational connection between fact and poetry, and that Greek thought or Hebrew thought has positively no business to influence English thought, logical grounds for despising Mr. Ruskin have not, we must confess, been discovered. True, many of his schemes bear in detail the mark of the poet and the idealist rather than of the practical man; as when he dreams of a national costume or of the fair procession in which youths and maidens should annually exult when judged by the State worthy of marriage. True, he has a horror of steam-machinery which will not commend itself to the business man, although his serious condemnation of steam has perhaps been exaggerated. Yet, when all elements of dreamy vision and of extreme and extravagant detail are withdrawn, there are still to be found in Mr. Ruskin's writings a fundamental conception of the State and its laws, and a systematized suggestion of needed reforms, which are not worthy of contempt. For adequate judgment of his theories the time has not yet come. His positive work seems, so far, to be represented by St. George's Guild, established in 1871. This is a company of men and women who, like-minded with himself, are bound together under him as their master with the purpose of

buying English land whereon to establish communities free from the rush of competition and the evils of machinery, and mainly devoted to the wholesome cultivation of the soil. The guild is small in numbers; its practical work seems greatly limited, though it has established a museum at Sheffield, and otherwise shown itself loyal and ready for service. Probably its influence extends far beyond those who range themselves as its members.

We have not spoken as yet of the way in which Mr. Ruskin's genius has impressed itself most strongly on his generation through his power of writing beautiful English. As an author he has done a great work, in many respects a high work, for English prose. It is by this power that he won his fame, and that, as many critics think, he will retain his place in English literature when his theories are forgotten or no longer needed. When the first volume of "Modern Painters" appeared, it seemed written in a language such as people had never heard before, — a language half way between poetry and prose, supple like prose, yet with the imaginative fervor of poetry. It was full of passages of description where the melodious sound seemed almost to present physical images to the senses; it glowed with color, throbbed with music. Yet this style, exciting and decorated as it was, was built on a foundation of pure English — English learned from the English Bible and from old divines. It was not Germanized, like Carlyle, nor Latinized, like Macaulay, but was soundly Saxon in structure, however embroidered with strange ornament.

As Ruskin grew older he came to use word-pictures, as they are called, less and less. The power to write them is dangerous, and in the hands of his imitators has become a weariful affectation. Even Ruskin himself is sometimes florid and over-charged. But his later books, in which this power though latent is controlled, and the power of clear, straightforward utterance is developed, are among the noblest models of English we possess. They are terse, they are pure, they are strong. Sometimes still an intense feeling is expressed in exaggerated though half humourous invective, or the author admits us to a whimsical intimacy that proves bewildering; but the passion, when it does not forget itself, irradiates the pages with a glow all the more impressive because subdued. There is no author of our time so legitimately magnificent in his use of English as Ruskin when he is at his best.

Ruskin has certainly one mark of greatness: for he defies classification. He can be claimed by no one school of artistic thought, social thought, or religious thought. Yet the heart of his teaching, in all his versatile books, is ever the same. He teaches that all beauty, all art, all work, and all life, are holy things: that through them God manifests Himself to man, and man draws near to God. It is in this reference of all matters in art and conduct to the spiritual standard, and the judgment of them all alike by a spiritual motive, that we shall find a steady consistency underlying his seemingly shifting utterances. In the unfaltering, though often sad, devoutness of his spirit, consists the

final claim of John Ruskin upon our earnest, faithful, and reverent study. He has summed up for us his own conception of the meaning of his life-work in a passage in the seventh volume of "Fors Clavigera:" —

"In rough approximation of date nearest to the completion of the several pieces of my life-work, as they are built one on the other, — at twenty, I wrote 'Modern Painters'; at thirty, 'The Stones of Venice'; at forty, 'Unto This Last'; at fifty, the inaugural Oxford lectures; and, if 'Fors Clavigera' is ever finished as I mean, it will mark the mind I had at sixty, and leave me, in the seventh day of my life, perhaps — to rest. For the code of all I had to teach will then be in form, as it is now at this hour in substance, completed.

"'Modern Painters' taught the claim of all lower nature on the hearts of men: of the rock, and wave, and herb, as a part of their necessary spirit life; in all that I now bid you to do, to dress the earth and keep it, I am fulfilling what I then began. 'The Stones of Venice' taught the laws of constructive art, and the dependence of all human work or edifice for its beauty on the happy life of the workman. 'Unto This Last' taught the laws of that life itself, and its dependence on the Sun of Justice. The inaugural Oxford lectures, the necessity that it should be led, and the gracious laws of beauty and labour recognized by the upper no less than the lower classes of England. And lastly, 'Fors Clavigera' has declared the relation of these to each other, and the only possible conditions of peace and honour, for low and high, rich and poor, together, in the holding of that first

estate, under the only Despot, God, from which whoso falls, angel or man, is kept, not mythically nor disputably, but here in visible horror of chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day: and in keeping which service is perfect freedom, and inheritance of all that a loving Creator can give to his creatures, and an immortal Father to his children.

"This, then, is the message which, knowing no more as I unfolded the scroll of it what next would be written there than a blade of grass knows what the form of its fruit shall be, I have been led on year by year to speak, even to this its end."

RUSKIN THE REVEALER OF NATURE.

"So it is with external Nature: she has a body and a soul like man; but her soul is the Deity. It is possible to represent the body without the spirit; and this shall be like to those whose senses are only cognizant of body. It is possible to represent the spirit in its ordinary and inferior manifestations; and this shall be like to those who have not watched for its moments of power. It is possible to represent the spirit in its secret and high operations; and this shall be like only to those to whose watching they have been revealed. All these are truth; but according to the dignity of the truths he can represent or feel is the power of the painter, — the justice of the judge."

— *Modern Painters.*

PRELUDE.

"LET us interrogate the great apparition which shines so peacefully around us. Let us enquire to what end is nature."

Thus writes Emerson, and proceeds to answer his own question. He tells us that the uses of nature are fourfold: Commodity, Beauty, Language, and Discipline. Commodity, — the value of nature to the physical man: here is the quality which appeals to nations in their childhood, men in their crudity, and forms the subject of the lower phases of physical science. Beauty, — the aspect which arrests the observant eye of the artist, and rejoices the eager soul of the poet. Language, — the revelation through type and symbol of an eternal Spirit, beheld shining through the veil of outward form by the mystic of all ages from Plato to Carlyle. Discipline, — the function of nature as the great teacher, who, through the sternness of multiform law, the tenderness of multiform sug-

gestion, moulds her child, æon after æon, into the likeness of the Perfect Man.

Seldom, indeed, is a man found responsive to the message of nature in all its different phases: dowered at once with the temperament of the scientist, the artist, the mystic, and the sage. But such a man is Ruskin. He has the instinct of the scientist; and he studies the facts of the world around him with patience reverent and minute. He has the eye of the artist, lovingly sensitive to every modulation of colour and of form; and no small measure has been vouchsafed to him of that creative power which, whether by words or tints, can reproduce for others perceived beauties. He has the soul of the mystic, swiftly alive to each spiritual suggestion latent in herb and cloud and mountain. And, finally, nature is more to him than use, than beauty, than language. She is also the guide to the moral being, and her ultimate value is in her training of the conscience and the will.

Thus it is with a singularly complete equipment that Ruskin comes to us as an interpreter of nature. All these different aspects and different methods of presentation blend in his writing like the colours in a gem, and flash out on us as we watch its varying lights. To trace them, one after another, to disentangle them, to study their nature and their union, is a fascinating possibility which the thoughtful reader will not fail to realize.

THE CONSECRATION.

DIFFICULT enough for you to imagine, that old travellers time, when Switzerland was yet the land of the Swiss, and the Alps had never been trod by foot of man. Steam, never heard of yet, but for short, fair-weather crossing at sea (were there paddle-packets across Atlantic? I forget). Anyway, the roads by land were safe; and entered once into this mountain Paradise, we wound on through its balmy glens, past cottage after cottage on their lawns, still glistening in the dew.

The road got into more barren heights by the mid-day, the hills arduous; once or twice we had to wait for horses, and we were still twenty miles from Schaffhausen at sunset; it was past midnight when we reached her closed gates. The disturbed porter had the grace to open them — not quite wide enough; we carried away one of the lamps in collision with the slanting bar as we drove through the arch. How much happier the privilege of dreamily entering a mediæval city, though with the loss of a lamp, than the free ingress of being jammed between a dray and a tram-car at a railroad station!

It is strange that I but dimly recollect the following morning; I fancy we must have gone to some sort of church or other; and certainly, part of the day went in admiring the bow-windows projecting into the clean streets. None of us seemed to have thought the Alps would be visible without profane exertion in climbing hills. We dined at four, as usual,

and the evening being entirely fine, went to walk, all of us, — my father and mother and Mary and I.

We must have still spent some time in town — seeing, for it was drawing toward sunset when we got up to some sort of garden promenade — west of the town, I believe; and high above the Rhine, so as to command the open country across it to south and west. At which open country of low undulation, far into blue, — gazing as at one of our own distances from Malvern of Worcestershire, or Dorking of Kent, — suddenly — behold — beyond.

There was no thought in any of us for a moment of their being clouds. They were as clear as crystal, sharp on the pure horizon sky, and already tinged with rose by the sinking sun. Infinitely beyond all that we had ever thought or dreamed, — the seen walls of lost Eden could have been more beautiful to us; not more awful, round heaven, the walls of sacred Death.

It is not possible to imagine, in any time of the world, a more blessed entrance into life, for a child of such a temperament as mine. True, the temperament belonged to the age: a very few years, — within the hundred, — before that, no child could have been born to care for the mountains, or for the men that lived among them, in that way. Till Rousseau's time, there had been no "sentimental" love of nature; and till Scott's, no such apprehensive love of "all sorts and conditions of men," not in the soul merely, but in the flesh. St. Bernard of La Fontaine, looking out to Mont Blanc, with his child's eyes, sees above Mont Blanc the Madonna; St. Bernard of Talloires, not the Lake of Annecy but the dead between Martigny and Aosta. But for me, the Alps and their people were alike beautiful in their snow, and their humanity; and I wanted, neither for them nor myself, sight of any throne in heaven but the rocks, or of any spirits in heaven but the clouds.

Thus, in perfect health of life and fire of heart, not wanting to be anything but the boy I was, not wanting to have anything more than I had; knowing of sorrow only just so much as to make life serious to me, not enough to slacken in the least its sinews; and with so much of science mixed with feeling as to make the sight of the Alps not only the revelation of the beauty of the earth, but the opening of the first page of its volume, — I went down that evening from the garden-terrace of Schaffhausen with my destiny fixed in all of it that was to be sacred and useful. To that terrace, and the shore of the Lake of Geneva, my heart and faith return to this day, in every impulse that is yet nobly alive in them, and every thought that has in it help or peace. — *Præterita*, vol. i. chap. vi.

JOHN RUSKIN.

STUDIES.

AIR AND CLOUDS.

THE deep of air that surrounds the earth enters into union with the earth at its surface, and with its waters; so as to be the apparent cause of their ascending into life. First, it warms them, and shades, at once, staying the heat of the sun's rays in its own body, but warding their force with its clouds. It warms and cools at once, with traffic of balm and frost; so that the white wreaths are withdrawn from the field of the Swiss peasant by the glow of Libyan rock. It gives its own strength to the sea; forms and fills every cell of its foam; sustains the precipices, and designs the valleys of its waves; gives the gleam to their moving under the night, and the white fire to their plains under sunrise; lifts their voices along the rocks, bears above them the spray of birds, pencils through them the dimpling of unfooted sands. It gathers out of them a portion in the hollow of its hand; dyes, with that, the hills into dark blue, and their glaciers with dying rose; inlays with that, for sapphire, the dome in which it has to set the cloud;

shapes out of that the heavenly flocks: divides them, numbers, cherishes, bears them on its bosom, calls them to their journeys, waits by their rest; feeds from them the brooks that cease not, and strews with them the dews that cease. It spins and weaves their fleece into wild tapestry, rends it, and renews; and flits and flames, and whispers, among the golden threads, thrilling them with a plectrum of strange fire that traverses them to and fro, and is enclosed in them like life.

It enters into the surface of the earth, subdues it, and falls together with it into fruitful dust, from which can be moulded flesh; it joins itself, in dew, to the substance of adamant; and becomes the green leaf out of the dry ground; it enters into the separated shapes of the earth it has tempered, commands the ebb and flow of the current of their life, fills their limbs with its own lightness, measures their existence by its indwelling pulse, moulds upon their lips the words by which one soul can be known to another; is to them the hearing of the ear, and the beating of the heart; and, passing away, leaves them to the peace that hears and moves no more. — *The Queen of the Air*, sec. 98.

We have next to ask what colour from sunshine can the white cloud receive, and what the black?

You won't expect me to tell you all that, or even the little that is accurately known about that, in a quarter of an hour; yet note these main facts on the matter.

On any pure white, and practically opaque, cloud, or thing like a cloud, as an Alp, or Milan Cathedral, you

can have cast by rising or setting sunlight, any tints of amber, orange, or moderately deep rose — you can't have lemon yellows, or any kind of green except in negative hue by opposition; and though by storm-light you may sometimes get the reds cast very deep, beyond a certain limit you cannot go, — the Alps are never vermilion colour, nor flamingo colour, nor canary colour; nor did you ever see a full scarlet cumulus of thundercloud.

On opaque white vapour, then, remember, you can get a glow or a blush of colour, never a flame of it.

But when the cloud is transparent, as well as pure, and can be filled with light through all the body of it, you then can have by the light reflected from its atoms any force conceivable by human mind of the entire group of the golden and ruby colours, from intensely burnished gold colour, through a scarlet for whose brightness there are no words, into any depth and any hue of Tyrian crimson and Byzantine purple. These with full blue breathed between them at the zenith, and green blue nearer the horizon, form the scales and chords of colour possible to the morning and evening sky in pure and fine weather; the keynote of the opposition being vermilion against green blue, both of equal tone, and at such a height and acme of brilliancy that you cannot see the line where their edges pass into each other. — *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, lect. i.

It is to be remembered that although clouds of course arrange themselves more or less into broad masses, with

a light side and dark side, both their light and shade are invariably composed of a series of divided masses, each of which has in its outline as much variety and character as the great outline of the cloud. . . . Nor are these multitudinous divisions a truth of slight importance in the character of sky, for they are dependent on, and illustrative of, a quality which is usually in a great degree overlooked, — the enormous retiring spaces of solid clouds. Between the illumined edge of a heaped cloud, and that part of its body which turns into shadow, there will generally be a clear distance of several miles, more or less of course, according to the general size of the cloud, but in such large masses as in Poussin and others of the old masters, occupy the fourth or fifth of the visible sky; the clear illumined breadth of vapour, from the edge to the shadow, involves at least a distance of five or six miles. We are little apt, in watching the changes of a mountainous range of cloud, to reflect that the masses of vapour which compose it, are huger and higher than any mountain range of the earth; and the distances between mass and mass are not yards of air traversed in an instant by the flying form, but valleys of changing atmosphere leagues over; that the slow motions of ascending curves, which we can scarcely trace, is a boiling energy of exulting vapour rushing into the heaven a thousand feet in a minute; and that the toppling angle whose sharp edge almost escapes notice in the multitudinous forms around it, is a nodding precipice of storms, 3000 feet from base to summit. It is not until we have actually compared the forms of the

sky with the hill ranges of the earth, and seen the soaring Alp overtopped and buried in one surge of the sky, that we begin to conceive or appreciate the colossal scale of the phenomena of the latter. But of this there can be no doubt in the mind of any one accustomed to trace the forms of clouds among hill ranges — as it is there a demonstrable and evident fact, that the space of vapour visibly extended over an ordinarily cloudy sky, is not less, from the point nearest to the observer to the horizon, than twenty leagues; that the size of every mass of separate form, if it be at all largely divided, is to be expressed in terms of *miles;* and that every boiling heap of illuminated mist in the nearer sky, is an enormous mountain, fifteen or twenty thousand feet in height, six or seven miles over in illuminated surface, furrowed by a thousand colossal ravines, torn by local tempests into peaks and promontories, and changing its features with the majestic velocity of the volcano. — *Modern Painters,* vol. i. part ii. sec. iii. chap. iii.

WATER.

Of all inorganic substances, acting in their own proper nature, and without assistance or combination, water is the most wonderful. If we think of it as the source of all the changefulness and beauty which we have seen in clouds; then as the instrument by which the earth we have contemplated was modelled into symmetry, and its crags chiselled into grace; then as, in the form of snow, it robes the mountains it has made, with that transcendent light which we could not have conceived if we had

not seen; then as it exists in the form of the torrent — in the iris which spans it, in the morning mist which rises from it, in the deep crystalline pools which mirror its hanging shore, in the broad lake and glancing river; finally, in that which is to all human minds the best emblem of unwearied, unconquerable power, the wild, various, fantastic, tameless unity of the sea; what shall we compare to this mighty, this universal element, for glory and for beauty? or how shall we follow its eternal changefulness of feeling? It is like trying to paint a soul. . . .

To paint the actual play of hue on the reflective surface, or to give the forms and fury of water when it begins to show itself — to give the flashing and rocket-like velocity of a noble cataract, or the precision and grace of the sea wave, so exquisitely modelled, though so mockingly transient — so mountainous in its form, yet so cloud-like in its motion — with its variety and delicacy of colour, when every ripple and wreath has some peculiar passage of reflection upon itself alone, and the radiating and scintillating sunbeams are mixed with the dim hues of transparent depth and dark rock below; — to do this perfectly is beyond the power of man; to do it even partially, has been granted to but one or two, even of those few who have dared to attempt it. . . .

The fact is, that there is hardly a roadside pond or pool which has not as much landscape *in* it as above it. It is not the brown, muddy, dull thing we suppose it to be; it has a heart like ourselves, and in the bottom of

that there are the boughs of the tall trees, and the blades of the shaking grass, and all manner of hues, of variable, pleasant light out of the sky; nay, the ugly gutter, that stagnates over the drain bars, in the heart of the foul city, is not altogether base; down in that, if you will look deep enough, you may see the dark, serious blue of far-off sky, and the passing of pure clouds. It is at your own will that you see in that despised stream, either the refuse of the street, or the image of the sky — so it is with almost all other things that we unkindly despise. — Vol. i. part ii. sec. v. chap. i.

For all other rivers there is a surface, and an underneath, and a vaguely displeasing idea of the bottom. But the Rhone flows like one lambent jewel; its surface is nowhere, its ethereal self is everywhere, the iridescent rush and translucent strength of it blue to the shore, — and radiant to the depth. Fifteen feet thick, of not flowing, but flying water; not water, neither, — melted glacier, rather, one should call it; the force of the ice is with it, and the wreathing of the clouds, the gladness of the sky, and the continuance of Time.

Waves of clear sea are, indeed, lovely to watch, but they are always coming or gone, never in any taken shape to be seen for a second. But here was one mighty wave that was always itself, and every fluted swirl of it, constant as the wreathing of a shell. No wasting away of the fallen foam, no pause for gathering of power, no helpless ebb of discouraged recoil; but alike through bright day and lulling night, the never-

pausing plunge, and never-fading flash, and never-hushing whisper, and, while the sun was up, the ever-answering glow of unearthly aquamarine, ultramarine, violet blue, gentian blue, peacock blue, river-of paradise blue, glass of a painted window melted in the sun, and the witch of the Alps flinging the spun tresses of it forever from her snow.

The innocent way, too, in which the river used to stop to look into every little corner. Great torrents always seem angry, and great rivers too often sullen; but there is no anger, no disdain, in the Rhone. It seemed as if the mountain stream was in mere bliss at recovering itself out of the lake-sleep, and raced because it rejoiced in racing, fain yet to return and stay. There were pieces of wave that danced all day as if Perdita were looking on to learn; there were little streams that skipped like lambs and leaped like chamois; there were pools that shook the sunshine all through them, and were rippled in layers of overlaid ripples, like crystal sand; there were currents that twisted the light into golden braids, and inlaid the threads with turquoise enamel; there were strips of stream that had certainly above the lake been mill-streams, and were looking busily for mills to turn again; there were shoots of stream that had once shot fearfully into the air, and now sprang up again laughing that they had only fallen a foot or two; — and in the midst of all the gay glittering and eddied lingering, the noble bearing by of the midmost depth, so mighty, yet so terrorless and harmless, with its swallows skimming instead of petrels, and

the dear old decrepit town as safe in the embracing sweep of it as if it were set in a brooch of sapphire. — *Præterita*, vol. ii. chap. v.

MOUNTAINS.

Mountains are to the rest of the body of the earth what violent muscular action is to the body of man. The muscles and tendons of its anatomy are, in the mountain, brought out with fierce and convulsive energy, full of expression, passion, and strength; the plains and the lower hills are the repose and the effortless motion of the frame, when its muscles lie dormant and concealed beneath the lines of its beauty, yet ruling those lines in their every undulation. This, then, is the first grand principle of the truth of the earth. The spirit of the hills is action; that of the lowlands, repose; and between these there is to be found every variety of motion and of rest; from the inactive plain, sleeping like the firmament, with cities for stars, to the fiery peaks, which, with heaving bosoms and exulting limbs, with the clouds drifting like hair from their bright foreheads, lift up their Titan hands to Heaven, saying, "I live forever!"

But there is this difference between the action of the earth, and that of a living creature, that while the exerted limb marks its bones and tendons through the flesh, the excited earth casts off the flesh altogether, and its bones come out from beneath. Mountains are the bones of the earth, their highest peaks are invariably those parts of its anatomy which in the plains lie buried

under five and twenty thousand feet of solid thickness of superincumbent soil, and which spring up in the mountain ranges in vast pyramids or wedges, flinging their garment of earth away from them on each side. The masses of the lower hills are laid over and against their sides, like the masses of lateral masonry against the skeleton arch of an unfinished bridge, except that they slope up to and lean against the central ridge: and, finally, upon the slopes of these lower hills are strewed the level beds of sprinkled gravel, sand, and clay, which form the extent of the champaign. Here then is another grand principle of the truth of earth, that the mountains must come from under all, and be the support of all; and that everything else must be laid in their arms, heap above heap, the plains being the uppermost. Opposed to this truth is every appearance of the hills being laid upon the plains, or built upon them. Nor is this a truth only of the earth on a large scale, for every minor rock (in position) comes out from the soil about it as an island out of the sea, lifting the earth near it like waves beating on its sides. — *Modern Painters*, vol. i. part ii. sec. iv. chap. i.

Examine the nature of your own emotion (if you feel it) at the sight of the Alp, and you find all the brightness of that emotion hanging, like dew on gossamer, on a curious web of subtle fancy and imperfect knowledge. First, you have a vague idea of its size, coupled with wonder at the work of the great Builder of its walls and foundations, then an apprehension of its eternity, a

pathetic sense of its perpetualness, and your own transientness, as of the grass upon its sides; then, and in this very sadness, a sense of strange companionship with past generations in seeing what they saw. They did not see the clouds that are floating over your head; nor the cottage wall on the other side of the field; nor the road by which you are travelling. But they saw *that*. The wall of granite in the heavens was the same to them as to you. They have ceased to look upon it; you will soon cease to look also, and the granite wall will be for others. Then, mingled with these more solemn imaginations, come the understandings of the gifts and glories of the Alps, the fancying forth of all the fountains that well from its rocky walls, and strong rivers that are born out of its ice, and of all the pleasant valleys that wind between its cliffs, and all the chalets that gleam among its clouds, and happy farmsteads couched upon its pastures; while together with the thoughts of these, rise strange sympathies with all the unknown of human life, and happiness, and death, signified by that narrow white flame of the everlasting snow, seen so far in the morning sky. — Vol. iii. part iv. chap. x.

Inferior hills ordinarily interrupt, in some degree, the richness of the valleys at their feet; the gray downs of Southern England, and treeless coteaux of central France, and gray swells of Scottish moor, whatever peculiar charms they may possess in themselves, are at least destitute of those which belong to the woods and

fields of the lowlands. But the great mountains *lift* the lowlands *on their sides.* Let the reader imagine, first, the appearance of the most varied plain of some richly cultivated country; let him imagine it dark with graceful woods, and soft with deepest pastures; let him fill the space of it, to the utmost horizon, with innumerable and changeful incidents of scenery and life; leading pleasant streamlets through its meadows, strewing clusters of cottages beside their banks, tracing sweet footpaths through its avenues, and animating its fields with happy flocks, and slow wandering spots of cattle; and when he has wearied himself with endless imagining, and left no space without some loveliness of its own, let him conceive all this great plain, with its infinite treasures of natural beauty and happy human life, gathered up in God's hands from one edge of the horizon to the other, like a woven garment; and shaken into deep, falling folds, as the robes droop from a king's shoulders; all its bright rivers leaping into cataracts along the hollows of its fall, and all its forests rearing themselves aslant against its slopes, as a rider rears himself back when his horse plunges; and all its villages nestling themselves into the new windings of its glens; and all its pastures thrown into steep waves of greensward, dashed with dew along the edges of their folds, and sweeping down into endless slopes, with a cloud here and there lying quietly, half on the grass, half in the air; and he will have as yet, in all this lifted world, only the foundation of one of the great Alps. And whatever is lovely in the lowland scenery becomes lovelier in

this change: the trees which grew heavily and stiffly from the level line of the plain assume strange lines of strength and grace as they bend themselves against the mountain side; they breathe more freely, and toss their branches more carelessly as each climbs higher, looking to the clear light above the topmost leaves of its brother tree: the flowers which on the arable plain fell before the plough, now find out for themselves unapproachable places, where year by year they gather into happier fellowship, and fear no evil; and the streams which in the level land crept in dark eddies by unwholesome banks, now move in showers of silver, and are clothed with rainbows and bring health and life wherever the glance of their waves can reach. — Vol. iv. part v. chap. vii.

VEGETATION.

Plants are, indeed, broadly referable to two great classes. The first we may, perhaps, not inexpediently call TENTED PLANTS. They live in encampments on the ground, as lilies; or on surfaces of rock, or stems of other plants, as lichens and mosses. They live — some for a year, some for many years, some for myriads of years; but, perishing, they pass as the tented Arab passes: they leave *no memorials of themselves*, except the seed, or bulb, or root, which is to perpetuate the race.

The other great class of plants we may perhaps best call BUILDING PLANTS. These will *not* live on the ground, but eagerly raise edifices above it. Each works hard with solemn forethought all its life. Perishing, it leaves

its work in the form which will be most useful to its successors — its own monument, and their inheritance. These architectural edifices we call "Trees." . . .

To us, as artists, or lovers of art, this is the first and most vital question concerning a plant: "Has it a fixed form or a changing one? Will it rise only to the height of a man — as an ear of corn — and perish like a man; or will it spread its boughs to the sea and branches to the river, and enlarge its circle of shade in heaven for a thousand years?"

This, I repeat, is the *first* question I ask the plant. And as it answers, I range it on one side or the other, among those that rest, or those that toil: tent-dwellers, who toil not, neither do they spin; or tree-builders, whose days are as the days of a people. . . .

Again, in questioning the true builders as to their modes of work, I find that they also are divisible into two great classes. Without in the least wishing the reader to accept the fanciful nomenclature, I think he may yet most conveniently remember these as "Builders with the shield," and "Builders with the sword."

Builders with the shield have expanded leaves, more or less resembling shields, partly in shape, but still more in office; for under their lifted shadow the young bud of the next year is kept from harm. These are the gentlest of the builders, and live in pleasant places, providing food and shelter for man. Builders with the sword, on the contrary, have sharp leaves in the shape of swords, and the young buds, instead of being as numerous as the leaves, crouching each under a leaf-shadow,

are few in number, and grow fearlessly, each in the midst of a sheaf of swords. These builders live in savage places, are sternly dark in colour, and, though they give much help to man by their merely physical strength, they (with few exceptions) give him no food, and imperfect shelter. Their mode of building is ruder than that of the shield-builders, and they in many ways resemble the pillar-plants of the opposite order. We call them generally "Pines." — Vol. v. part vi. chap. ii.

A sword-builder may be generally considered as a shield-builder put under the severest military restraint. The graceful and thin leaf is concentrated into a strong, narrow, pointed rod; and the insertion of these rods on the stem is in a close and perfectly timed order. . . . Other trees, tufting crag or hill, yield to the form and sway of the ground, clothe it with soft compliance, are partly its subjects, partly its flatterers, partly its comforters. But the pine rises in serene resistance, self-contained; nor can I ever without awe stay long under a great Alpine cliff, far from all house or work of men, looking up to its companies of pine, as they stand on the inaccessible juts and perilous ledges of the enormous wall, in quiet multitudes, each like the shadow of the one beside it — upright, fixed, spectral, as troops of ghosts standing on the walls of Hades, not knowing each other — dumb forever. You cannot reach them, cannot cry to them; — those trees never heard human voice; they are far above all sound but of the winds. No foot ever stirred fallen leaf of theirs. All comfortless they

stand, between the two eternities of the Vacancy and the Rock: yet with such iron will, that the rock itself looks bent and shattered beside them — fragile, weak, inconsistent, compared to their dark energy of delicate life, and monotony of enchanted pride: — unnumbered, unconquerable. — Vol. v. part vi. chap. ix.

Break off an elm bough, three feet long, in full leaf, and lay it on the table before you, and try to draw it, leaf for leaf. It is ten to one if in the whole bough (provided you do not twist it about as you work) you find one form of a leaf exactly like another; perhaps you will not even have *one* complete. Every leaf will be oblique, or foreshortened, or curled, or crossed by another, or shaded by another, or have something or other the matter with it; and though the whole bough will look graceful and symmetrical, you will scarcely be able to tell how or why it does so, since there is not one line of it like another. . . .

But if nature is so various when you have a bough on the table before you, what must she be when she retires from you, and gives you her whole mass and multitude? The leaves then at the extremities become as fine as dust, a mere confusion of points and lines between you and the sky, a confusion which you might as well hope to draw sea-sand particle by particle, as to imitate leaf for leaf. This, as it comes down into the body of the tree, gets closer, but never opaque; it is always transparent, with crumbling lights in it letting you through to the sky; then, out of this, come, heavier and heavier,

the masses of illumined foliage, all dazzling and inextricable, save here and there a single leaf on the extremities; then, under these, you get deep passages of broken, irregular gloom, passing into transparent green-lighted, misty hollows; the twisted stems glancing through them in their pale and entangled infinity, and the shafted sunbeams, rained from above, running along the lustrous leaves for an instant; then lost, then caught again on some emerald bank or knotted root, to be sent up again with a faint reflex on the white under-sides of dim groups of drooping foliage, the shadows of the upper boughs running in gray network down the glossy stems, and resting in quiet checkers upon the glittering earth; but all penetrable and transparent, and, in proportion, inextricable and incomprehensible, except where across the labyrinth and the mystery of the dazzling light and dream-like shadow, falls, close to us, some solitary spray, some wreath of two or three motionless large leaves, the type and embodying of all that in the rest we feel and imagine, but can never see. — Vol. i. part ii. sec. vi. chap. i.

The leaves, as we shall see immediately, are the feeders of the plant. Their own orderly habits of succession must not interfere with their main business of finding food. Where the sun and air are, the leaf must go, whether it be out of order or not. So, therefore, in any group, the first consideration with the young leaves is much like that of young bees, how to keep out of each other's way, that every one may at once leave its

neighbours as much free-air pasture as possible, and obtain a relative freedom for itself. This would be a quite simple matter, and produce other simply balanced forms, if each branch, with open air all round it, had nothing to think of but reconcilement of interests among its own leaves. But every branch has others to meet or to cross, sharing with them, in various advantage, what shade, or sun, or rain is to be had. Hence every single leaf-cluster presents the general aspect of a little family, entirely at unity among themselves, but obliged to get their living by various shifts, concessions, and infringements of the family rules, in order not to invade the privileges of other people in their neighbourhood.

And in the arrangement of these concessions there is an exquisite sensibility among the leaves. They do not grow each to his own liking, till they run against one another, and then turn back sulkily; but by a watchful instinct, far apart, they anticipate their companions' courses, as ships at sea, and in every new unfolding of their edged tissue, guide themselves by the sense of each other's remote presence, and by a watchful penetration of leafy purpose in the far future. So that every shadow which one casts on the next, and every glint of sun which each reflects to the next, and every touch which in toss of storm each receives from the next, aid or arrest the development of their advancing form, and direct, as will be safest and best, the curve of every fold and the current of every vein.

And this peculiar character exists in all the structures

thus developed, that they are always visibly the result of a volition on the part of the leaf, meeting an external force or fate, to which it is never passively subjected. Upon it, as on a mineral in the course of formation, the great merciless influences of the universe, and the oppressive powers of minor things immediately near it, act continually. Heat and cold, gravity and the other attractions, windy pressure, or local and unhealthy restraint, must, in certain inevitable degrees, affect the whole of its life. But it is *life* which they affect; — a life of progress and will, — not a merely passive accumulation of substance. This may be seen by a single glance. The mineral — suppose an agate in the course of formation — shows in every line nothing but a dead submission to surrounding force. Flowing, or congealing, its substance is here repelled, there attracted, unresistingly to its place, and its languid sinuosities follow the clefts of the rock that contains them, in servile deflexion and compulsory cohesion, impotently calculable, and cold. But the leaf, full of fears and affections, shrinks and seeks, as it obeys. Not thrust, but awed into its retiring; not dragged, but won to its advance; not bent aside, as by a bridle, into new courses of growth: but persuaded and converted through tender continuance of voluntary change.

The mineral and it differing thus widely in separate being, they differ no less in modes of companionship. The mineral crystals group themselves neither in succession, nor in sympathy; but great and small recklessly strive for place, and deface or distort each other as they

gather into opponent asperities. The confused crowd fills the rock cavity, hanging together in a glittering, yet sordid heap, in which nearly every crystal, owing to their vain contention, is imperfect, or impure. Here and there one, at the cost and in defiance of the rest, rises into unwarped shape or unstained clearness. But the order of the leaves is one of soft and subdued concession. Patiently each awaits its appointed time, accepts its prepared place, yields its required observance. Under every oppression of external accident, the group yet follows a law laid down in its own heart; and all the members of it, whether in sickness or health, in strength or languor, combine to carry out this first and last heart law; receiving, and seeming to desire for themselves and for each other, only life which they may communicate, and loveliness which they may reflect. — Vol. v. part vi. chap. iv.

It is strange to think of the gradually diminished power and withdrawn freedom among the order of the leaves — from the sweep of the chestnut and gadding of the vine, down to the close shrinking trefoil, and contented daisy, pressed on earth; and, at last, to the leaves that are not merely close to earth, but themselves a part of it; fastened down to it by their sides, here and there only a wrinkled edge rising from the granite crystals. We have found beauty in the tree yielding fruit, and in the herb yielding seed. How of the herb yielding *no* seed, the fruitless, flowerless lichen of the rock?

Lichen, and mosses (though these last in their luxuri-

ance are deep and rich as herbage, yet both for the most part humblest of the green things that live), — how of these? Meek creatures! the first mercy of the earth, veiling with hushed softness its dintless rocks; creatures full of pity, covering with strange and tender honor the scarred disgrace of ruin, — laying quiet fingers on the trembling stones, to teach them rest. No words, that I know of, will say what these mosses are. None are delicate enough, none perfect enough, none rich enough. How is one to tell of the rounded bosses of furred and beaming green, — the starred divisions of rubied bloom, fine-filmed, as if the Rock Spirits could spin porphyry as we do glass, — the traceries of intricate silver, and fringes of amber, lustrous, arborescent, burnished through every fibre into fitful brightness and glossy traverses of silken change, yet all subdued and pensive, and framed for simplest, sweetest offices of grace. They will not be gathered, like the flowers, for chaplet or love-token; but of these the wild bird will make its nest, and the wearied child his pillow.

And, as the earth's first mercy, so they are its last gift to us. When all other service is vain, from plant and tree, the soft mosses and gray lichens take up their watch by the headstone. The woods, the blossoms, the gift-bearing grasses, have done their part for a time, but these do service forever. Trees for the builder's yard, flowers for the bride's chamber, corn for the granary, moss for the grave.

Yet as in one sense the humblest, in another they are the most honored of the earth-children. Unfading, as

motionless, the worm frets them not, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in loveliness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them, slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is entrusted the weaving of the dark, eternal tapestries of the hills; to them, slow-pencilled, iris-dyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the unimpassioned rock, they share also its endurance: and while the winds of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossoms like drifted snow, and summer dims on the parched meadow the drooping of its cowslip-gold, — far above, among the mountains, the silver lichen-spots rest, star-like, on the stone; and the gathering orange stain upon the edge of yonder western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years. — Vol. v. part vi. chap. x.

VIGNETTES.

THE RISING HEIGHT.

The mountain lies in the morning light, like a level vapor; its gentle lines of ascent are scarcely felt by the eye; it rises without effort or exertion, by the mightiness of its mass; every slope is full of slumber; and we know not how it has been exalted, until we find it laid as a floor for the walking of the eastern clouds. — *Modern Painters*, vol. i. part ii. sec. iv. chap. iii.

THE SNOW-DRIFT.

In the range of inorganic nature, I doubt if any object can be found more perfectly beautiful than a fresh, deep snow-drift, seen under warm light. Its curves are of inconceivable perfection and changefulness, its surface and transparency alike exquisite, its light and shade of inexhaustible variety and inimitable finish, the shadows sharp, pale, and of heavenly color, the reflected lights intense and multitudinous, and mingled with the sweet occurrences of transmitted light. — Vol. i. part ii. sec. iv. chap. ii.

RAIN-CLOUDS AT DAWN.

Often, in our English mornings, the rain-clouds in the dawn form soft level fields, which melt imperceptibly into the blue; or when of less extent, gather into

apparent bars, crossing the sheets of broader cloud above; and all these bathed throughout in an unspeakable light of pure rose-colour, and purple, and amber, and blue; not shining, but misty-soft; the barred masses, when seen nearer, composed of clusters or tresses of cloud, like floss silk; looking as if each knot were a little swathe or sheaf of lighted rain. No clouds form such skies, none are so tender, various, inimitable. — Vol. v. part vii. chap. iv.

ALPINE ARCHITECTURE.

The longer I stayed among the Alps, and the more closely I examined them, the more I was struck by the one broad fact of their being a vast Alpine plateau, or mass of elevated land. . . . And, for the most part, the great peaks are not allowed to come to the edge of it, but remain, like the keeps of castles, far withdrawn, surrounded, league beyond league, by comparatively level fields of mountain, over which the lapping sheets of glacier writhe and flow, foaming about the feet of the dark central crests like the surf of an enormous sea-breaker hurled over a rounded rock, and islanding some fragment of it in the midst. — Vol. iv. part v. chap. xiii.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LEAVES.

You will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts — the leaf and root — one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each hav-

ing faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one, which loves the light, has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves, and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair forever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey, and we call them "Flowers." — *Fors Clavigera*, letter v.

DISTANT PEAKS.

Though the greater clearness of the upper air permits the high summits to be seen with extraordinary distinctness, yet they never can by any possibility have dark or deep shadows, or intense dark relief against a light. Clear they may be, but faint they must be, and their great and prevailing characteristic, as distinguished from other mountains, is want of apparent solidity. They rise in the morning light rather like sharp shades, cast up into the sky, than solid earth. Their lights are pure, roseate, and cloud-like — their shadows transparent, pale, and opalescent, and often indistinguishable from the air around them, so that the mountain-top is seen in the heaven only by its flakes of motionless fire. — *Modern Painters*, vol. i. part ii. sec. iv. chap. ii.

THE WATERFALL.

. . . A broad ledge of moss and turf, leaning in a formidable precipice over the Arve. An almost isolated rock promontory, many-colored, rises at the end of it. On the other sides it is bordered by cliffs, from which a

little cascade falls, literally down among the pines, for it is so light, shaking itself into mere showers of seed pearl in the sun, that the pines don't know it from mist, and grow through it without minding. Underneath, there is only the mossy silence, and above, forever, the snow of the nameless Aiguille. — Vol. v. part vi. chap. ix.

THE CUMULUS.

It is actually some two years since I last saw a noble cumulus cloud under full light. I chanced to be standing under the Victoria Tower at Westminster, when the largest mass of them floated past, that day, from the north-west; and I was more impressed than ever yet by the awfulness of the cloud-form, and its unaccountableness, in the present state of our knowledge. The Victoria Tower, seen against it, had no magnitude: it was like looking at Mont Blanc over a lamp-post. The domes of cloud-snow were heaped as definitely; their broken flanks were as gray and firm as rocks, and the whole mountain, of a compass and height in heaven which only became more and more inconceivable as the eye strove to ascend it, was passing behind the tower with a steady march, whose swiftness must in reality have been that of a tempest: yet, along all the ravines of vapor, precipice kept pace with precipice, and not one thrust another. — *The Eagle's Nest*, vii. sec. 30.

THE BREAKER ON THE ROCKS.

One moment, a flint cave: the next, a marble pillar: the next, a mere white fleece thickening the thundery rain. — *The Harbors of England.*

THE SPIRIT OF THE SOLDANELLA.

I have already noticed the example of very pure and high typical beauty which is to be found in the lines and gradations of unsullied snow: if, passing to the edge of a sheet of it, upon the lower Alps, early in May, we find, as we are nearly sure to find, two or three little round openings pierced in it, and through these, emergent, a slender, pensive, fragile flower whose small, dark, purple-fringed bell hangs down and shudders over the icy cleft that it has cloven, as if partly wondering at its own recent grave, and partly dying of very fatigue after its hard-won victory; we shall be, or we ought to be, moved by a totally different impression of loveliness from that which we receive among the dead ice and the idle clouds. There is now uttered to us a call for sympathy, now offered to us an image of moral purpose and achievement, which, however unconscious or senseless the creature may indeed be that so seems to call, cannot be heard without affection, nor contemplated without worship, by any of us whose heart is rightly tuned, or whose mind is clearly and surely sighted. — *Modern Painters,* vol. ii. part iii. ch. xii.

INTERPRETATIONS.

THE EARTH-VEIL.

What infinite wonderfulness there is in this vegetation, considered, as indeed it is, as the means by which the earth becomes the companion of man — his friend and his teacher! In the conditions which we have traced in its rocks, there could only be seen preparation for his existence; — the characters which enable him to live on it safely, and to work with it easily — in all these it has been inanimate and passive; but vegetation is to it as an imperfect soul, given to meet the soul of man. The earth in its depths must remain dead and cold, incapable except of slow crystalline change; but at its surface, which human beings look upon and deal with, it ministers to them through a veil of strange intermediate being; which breathes, but has no voice; moves, but cannot leave its appointed place; passes through life without consciousness, to death without bitterness; wears the beauty of youth without its passion; and declines to the weakness of age, without its regret.

And in this mystery of intermediate being, entirely subordinate to us, with which we can deal as we choose, having just the greater power as we have the less responsibility for our treatment of the unsuffering creature,

most of the pleasures which we need from the external world are gathered, and most of the lessons we need are written, all kinds of precious grace and teaching being united in this link between the Earth and Man: wonderful in universal adaptation to his need, desire, and discipline; God's daily preparation of the earth for him, with beautiful means of life. First, a carpet to make it soft for him; then, a colored fantasy of embroidery thereon; then, tall spreading of foliage to shade him from sunheat, and shade also the fallen rain, that it may not dry quickly back into the clouds, but stay to nourish the springs among the moss. Stout wood to bear this leafage: easily to be cut, yet tough and light, to make houses for him, or instruments (lance-shaft, or plough-handle, according to his temper); useless it had been, if harder; useless, if less fibrous; useless, if less elastic. Winter comes, and the shade of leafage falls away, to let the sun warm the earth; the strong boughs remain, breaking the strength of winter winds. The seeds which are to prolong the race, innumerable according to the need, are made beautiful and palatable, varied into infinitude of appeal to the fancy of man, or provision for his service: cold juice or glowing spice, or balm, or incense, softening oil, preserving resin, medicine of styptic, febrifuge, or lulling charm: and all these presented in forms of endless change. Fragility or force, softness and strength, in all degrees and aspects; unerring uprightness, as of temple pillars, or undivided wandering of feeble tendrils on the ground; mighty resistances of rigid arm and limb to the storms

of ages, or wavings to and fro with faintest pulse of summer streamlet. Roots cleaving the strength of rock, or binding the transience of the sand; crests basking in sunshine of the desert, or hiding by dripping spring and lightless cave; foliage far tossing in entangled fields beneath every wave of ocean — clothing with variegated, everlasting films, the peaks of the trackless mountains, or ministering at cottage doors to every gentlest passion and simplest joy of humanity. — Vol. v. part vi. chap. i.

THE CLOUD-BALANCINGS.

We have seen that when the earth had to be prepared for the habitation of man, a veil, as it were, of intermediate being was spread between him and its darkness, in which were joined, in a subdued measure, the stability and insensibility of the earth, and the passion and perishing of mankind.

But the heavens, also, had to be prepared for his habitation.

Between their burning light, — their deep vacuity, and man, as between the earth's gloom of iron substance and man, a veil had to be spread of intermediate being; — which should appease the unendurable glory to the level of human feebleness, and sign the changeless motion of the heavens with a semblance of human vicissitude.

Between the earth and man arose the leaf. Between the heaven and man came the cloud. His life being partly as the falling leaf, and partly as the flying vapour.

Has the reader any distinct idea of what clouds are?

We had some talk about them long ago, and perhaps thought their nature, though at that time not clear to us, would be easily enough understandable when we put ourselves seriously to make it out. Shall we begin with one or two easiest questions?

That mist which lies in the morning so softly in the valley level and white, through which the tops of the trees rise as if through an inundation — why is *it* so heavy? and why does it lie so low, being yet so thin and frail that it will melt away utterly into splendor of morning when the sun has shone on it but a few moments more? Those colossal pyramids, huge and firm, with outlines as of rocks, and strength to bear the beating of the high sun full on their fiery flanks — why are *they* so light, — their bases high over our heads, high over the heads of Alps? why will these melt away, not as the sun rises, but as he descends, and leave the stars of twilight clear, while the valley vapour gains again upon the earth like a shroud?

I know not if the reader will think at first that questions like these are easily answered. So far from it, I rather believe that some of the mysteries of the clouds never will be understood by us at all. "Knowest thou the balancings of the clouds?" Is the answer ever to be one of pride? "The wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?" Is *our* knowledge ever to be so? — Vol. v. part vii. chap. i.

THE CLOUD IN THE BIBLE.

The "clouds" and "heavens" are used as interchangeable words in those Psalms which most distinctly set forth the power of God: "He bowed the heavens also, and came down; He made darkness pavilions round about Him, dark waters and thick clouds of the skies." . . . And, again, "His excellency is over Israel, and His strength is in the clouds." Again: "The clouds poured out water, the skies sent out a sound, the voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven." Again: "Clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne; the heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory."

In all these passages the meaning is unmistakable, if they possess definite meaning at all. We are too apt to take them merely for sublime and vague imagery, and therefore gradually to lose the apprehension of their life and power. The expression, "He bowed the heavens," for instance, is, I suppose, received by most readers as a magnificent hyperbole, having reference to some peculiar and fearful manifestation of God's power to the writer of the Psalm in which the words occur. But the expression either has plain meaning, or it has *no* meaning. Understand by the term "heavens" the compass of infinite space around the earth, and the expression "bowed the heavens," however sublime, is wholly without meaning; infinite space cannot be bent or bowed. But understand by the "heavens" the veil of

clouds above the earth, and the expression is neither hyperbolical nor obscure; it is pure, plain, and accurate truth, and it describes God, not as revealing himself in any peculiar way to David, but doing what He is still doing before our own eyes day by day. By accepting the words in their simple sense, we are thus led to apprehend the immediate presence of the Deity, and His purpose of manifesting Himself as near us whenever the storm-cloud stoops upon its course; while by our vague and inaccurate acceptance of the words, we remove the idea of His presence far from us, into a region which we can neither see nor know; and gradually, from the close realization of a living God who "maketh the clouds His chariot," we refine and explain ourselves into dim and distant suspicion of an inactive God, inhabiting inconceivable places, and fading into the multitudinous formalisms of the laws of nature. . . .

I would desire, therefore, to receive God's account of His own creation as under the ordinary limits of human knowledge and imagination it would be received by a simple-minded man; . . . and I understand the making the firmament to signify that, so far as man is concerned, most magnificent ordinance of the clouds; — the ordinance, that as the great plain of waters was formed on the face of the earth, so also a plain of waters should be stretched along the height of air, and the face of the cloud answer the face of the ocean; and that this upper and heavenly plain should be of waters, as it were, glorified in their nature, no longer quenching the fire, but now bearing fire in their own bosoms; no longer

murmuring only when the winds raise them or rocks divide, but answering each other with their own voices from pole to pole; no longer restrained by established shores, and guided through unchanging channels, but going forth at their pleasure, like the armies of the angels, and choosing their encampments upon the heights of the hills; no longer hurried downwards forever, moving but to fall, nor lost in lightless accumulation of the abyss, but covering the east and west with the waving of their wings, and robing the gloom of the farther infinite with a vesture of divers colours, of which the threads are purple and scarlet, and the embroideries flame.

This, I believe, is the ordinance of the firmament; and it seems to me that in the midst of the material nearness of these heavens, God means us to acknowledge His own immediate presence as visiting, judging, and blessing us. "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped, at the presence of God." "He doth set His bow in the cloud," and thus renews, in the sound of every drooping swathe of rain, His promises of everlasting love. "In them hath He set a *tabernacle* for the sun;" whose burning ball, which without the firmament would be seen as an intolerable and scorching circle in the blackness of vacuity, is by that firmament surrounded with gorgeous service, and tempered by mediatorial ministries; by the firmament of clouds the golden pavement is spread for His chariot wheels at morning; by the firmament of clouds the temple is built for His presence to fill with light at noon; by the firmament of clouds the purple

veil is closed at evening round the sanctuary of His rest; by the mists of the firmament His implacable light is divided, and its separated fierceness appeased into the soft blue that fills the depth of distance with its bloom, and the flush with which the mountains burn as they drink the overflowing of the day-spring. And in this tabernacling of the unendurable sun with men, through the shadows of the firmament, God would seem to set forth the stooping of His own majesty to men, upon the *throne* of the firmament. As the Creator of all the worlds, and the Inhabiter of Eternity, we cannot behold Him; but as the Judge of the earth and the Preserver of men, those heavens are indeed His dwelling-place. "Swear not, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool." And all those passings to and fro of fruitful shower and grateful shade, and all those visions of silver palaces built about the horizon, and voices of moaning winds and threatening thunders, and glories of colored robe and cloven ray, are but to deepen in our hearts the acceptance, and distinctness, and dearness of the simple words, "Our Father which art in heaven." — Vol. iv. part v. chap. vi.

THE SECRET OF THE MIST.

Mist of some sort, or mirage, or confusion of light, or of cloud, are the general facts; the distance may vary in different climates at which the effects of mist begin, but they are always present; and therefore, in all probability, it is meant that we should enjoy them.

Nor does it seem to me in any wise difficult to under-

stand why they should be thus appointed for enjoyment. In former parts of this work we were able to trace a certain delightfulness in every visible feature of natural things which was typical of any great spiritual truth; surely, therefore, we need not wonder now, that mist and all its phenomena have been made delightful to us, since our happiness as thinking beings must depend upon our being content to accept only partial knowledge, even in those matters which chiefly concern us. If we insist upon perfect intelligibility and complete declaration in every moral subject, we shall instantly fall into misery of unbelief. Our whole happiness and power of energetic action depend upon our being able to breathe and live in the cloud; content to see it opening here and closing there; rejoicing to catch through the thinnest films of it, glimpses of stable and substantial things; but yet perceiving a nobleness even in the concealment, and rejoicing that the kindly veil is spread where the untempered light might have scorched us, or the infinite clearness wearied. — Vol. iv. part v. chap. v.

NATURAL MYTHS: BIRD AND SERPENT.

We have two orders of animals to take some note of, which will illustrate this matter very sufficiently for us.

The orders of animals are the serpent and the bird; the serpent, in which the breath, or spirit, is less than in any other creature, and the earth-power greatest: — the bird, in which the breath, or spirit, is more full than in any other creature, and the earth-power least.

We will take the bird first. It is little more than a

drift of the air, brought into form by plumes; the air is in all its quills, it breathes through its whole frame and flesh, and glows with air in its flying, like a blown flame: it rests upon the air, subdues it, surpasses it, outraces it; *is* the air, conscious of itself, conquering itself, ruling itself.

Also, into the throat of the bird is given the voice of the air. All that in the wind itself is weak, wild, useless in sweetness, is knit together in its song. As we may imagine the wild form of the cloud closed into the perfect form of the bird's wings, so the wild voice of the cloud, into its perfect and commanded voice; unwearied, rippling through the clear heaven in its gladness, interpreting all intense passion through the soft spring nights, bursting into acclaim and rapture of choir at daybreak, or lisping and twittering among the boughs and hedges through heat of day, like little winds that only make the cowslip bells shake, and ruffle the petals of the wild rose.

Also, upon the plumes of the bird are put the colors of the air: on these the gold of the cloud, that cannot be gathered by any covetousness; the rubies of the clouds, that are not the price of Athena, but *are* Athena; the vermilion of the cloud-bar, and the flame of the cloud-crest, and the snow of the cloud and its shadow, and the melted blue of the deep wells of the sky — all these, seized by the creating spirit, and woven by Athena herself into films and threads of plume; with wave on wave following and fading along breast, and throat, and opened wings, infinite as the dividing of the foam and

the sifting of the sea-sand; — even the white down of the cloud seeming to flutter up between the stronger plumes, seen but too soft for touch.

And so, the Spirit of the Air is put into, and upon, this created form; and it becomes, through twenty centuries, the symbol of divine help, descending, as the Fire, to speak, but as the Dove, to bless.

Next, in the serpent, we approach the source of a group of myths, world-wide, founded on great and common human instincts, respecting which I must note one or two points which bear intimately on all our subject. For it seems to me that the scholars who are at present occupied in interpretation of human myths have most of them forgotten that there are any such things as natural myths; and that the dark sayings of men may be both difficult to read, and not always worth reading; but the dark sayings of nature will probably become clearer for the looking into, and will very certainly be worth reading. And, indeed, all guidance to the right sense of the human and variable myths, will probably depend on our first getting at the sense of the natural and invariable ones. The dead hieroglyph may have meant this or that — the living hieroglyph means always the same; but remember, it is just as much a hieroglyph as the other; nay, more, — a "sacred or reserved sculpture," a thing with an inner language. The serpent crest of the king's crown, or of the god's, on the pillars of Egypt, is a mystery; but the serpent itself, gliding past the pillar's foot, is it less a mystery? Is there, indeed, no tongue, except the mute forked flash

from its lips, in that running brook of horror on the ground?

Why that horror? We all feel it; yet how imaginative it is, how disproportioned to the real strength of the creature! There is more poison in an ill-kept drain, — in a pool of dish-washings at a cottage door, than in the deadliest asp of Nile. Every back-yard which you look down into from the railway, as it carries you out by Vauxhall or Deptford, holds its coiled serpent: all the walls of those ghastly suburbs are enclosure of tank temples for serpent-worship; yet you feel no horror in looking down into them, as you would if you saw the livid scales and lifted head. There is more venom, mortal, inevitable, in a single word, sometimes, or in the gliding entrance of a wordless thought, than ever "*Vanti Libia con sua vena.*" But that horror is of the myth, not of the creature. There are myriads lower than this, and more loathsome, in the scale of being; the links between dead matter and animation drift everywhere unseen. But it is the strength of the base element that is so dreadful in the serpent: it is the very omnipotence of the earth. That rivulet of smooth silver — how does it flow, think you? It literally rows on the earth, with every scale for an oar; it bites the dust with the ridges of its body. Watch it, when it moves slowly: — A wave, but without wind; a current, but with no fall! all the body moving at the same instant, yet some of it to one side, some to another, or some forward, and the rest of the coil backwards; but all with the same calm will and equal way — no contraction, no

extension; one soundless, causeless march of sequent rings, and spectral procession of spotted dust, with dissolution in its fangs, dislocation in its coils. Startle it; — the winding stream will become a twisted arrow; — the wave of poisoned life will lash through the grasses like a cart lane. It scarcely breathes with its one lung (the other shrivelled and abortive); it is passive to the sun and shade, and is cold or hot, like a stone; yet "it can outclimb the monkey, outswim the fish, outleap the zebra, outwrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger." It is a divine hieroglyph of the demoniac power of the earth, — of the entire earthly nature. As the bird is the clothed power of the air, so this is the clothed power of the dust; as the bird the symbol of the spirit of life, so this of the grasp and sting of death. — *The Queen of the Air*, secs. 64–68.

THE MISSION OF NATURE.

The great mechanical impulses of the age, of which most of us are so proud, are a mere passing fever, half speculative, half childish. People will discover at last that royal roads to anything can no more be laid in iron than they can in dust; that there are, in fact, no royal roads to anywhere worth going to; that if there were, it would that instant cease to be worth going to, I mean so far as the things to be obtained are in any way estimable in terms of *price*. For there are two classes of precious things in the world: those that God gives us for nothing — sun, air, and life (both mortal life and immortal); and the secondarily precious things which

He gives us for a price: these secondarily precious things, worldly wine and milk, can only be bought for definite money; they never can be cheapened. No cheating nor bargaining will ever get a single thing out of nature's "establishment" at half-price. Do we want to be strong? — we must work. To be hungry? — we must starve. To be happy? — we must be kind. To be wise? — we must look and think. No changing of place at a hundred miles an hour, nor making of stuffs a thousand yards a minute, will make us one whit stronger, happier, or wiser. There was always more in the world than men could see, walked they ever so slowly; they will see it no better for going fast. And they will at last, and soon, too, find out that their grand inventions for conquering (as they think) space and time do in reality conquer nothing; for space and time are, in their own essence, unconquerable, and besides did not want any sort of conquering; they wanted *using*. A fool always wants to shorten space and time: a wise man wants to lengthen both. A fool wants to kill space and kill time: a wise man, first to gain them, then to animate them. Your railroad, when you come to understand it, is only a device for making the world smaller: and as for being able to talk from place to place, that is, indeed, well and convenient; but suppose you have, originally, nothing to say. We shall be obliged at last to confess, what we should long ago have known, that the really precious things are thought and sight, not pace. It does a bullet no good to go fast; and a man, if he be truly a man, no harm

to go slow; for his glory is not at all in going, but in being. . . .

And I am Utopian and enthusiastic enough to believe, that the time will come when the world will discover this. It has now made its experiments in every possible direction but the right one; and it seems that it must, at last, try the right one, in a mathematical necessity. It has tried fighting, and preaching, and fasting, buying and selling, pomp and parsimony, pride and humiliation, — every possible manner of existence in which it could conjecture there was any happiness or dignity; and all the while, as it bought, sold, and fought, and fasted, and wearied itself with policies, and ambitions, and self-denials, God had placed its real happiness in the keeping of the little mosses of the wayside, and of the clouds of the firmament. Now and then a weary king, or a tormented slave, found out where the true kingdoms of the world were, and possessed himself, in a furrow or two of garden ground, of a truly infinite dominion. But the world would not believe their report, and went on trampling down the mosses, and forgetting the clouds, and seeking happiness in its own way, until, at last, blundering and late, came natural science; and in natural science not only the observation of things, but the finding out of new uses for them. Of course the world, having a choice left to it, went wrong, as usual, and thought that these mere material uses were to be the sources of its happiness. It got the clouds packed into iron cylinders, and made it carry its wise self at their own cloud pace. It got weavable fibres out of the mosses, and

made clothes for itself, cheap and fine, — here was happiness at last. To go as fast as the clouds, and manufacture everything out of anything, — here was paradise, indeed!

And now, when, in a little while, it is unparadised again, if there were any other mistake that the world could make, it would of course make it. But I see not that there is any other; and, standing fairly at its wits' ends, having found that going fast, when it is used to it, is no more paradisaical than going slow; and that all the prints and cottons in Manchester cannot make it comfortable in its mind, I do verily believe it will come, finally, to understand that God paints the clouds and shapes the moss-fibres, that men may be happy in seeing Him at His work, and that in resting quietly beside Him, and watching His working, and — according to the power He has communicated to ourselves, and the guidance He grants, — in carrying out His purposes of peace and charity among all His creatures, are the only real happinesses that ever were, or ever will be, possible to mankind. — *Modern Painters,* vol. iii. part iv. ch. xvii.

THE LAW OF HELP.

Perhaps the best, though the most familiar example we could take of the nature and power of consistence, will be that of the possible changes in the dust we tread on.

Exclusive of animal decay, we can hardly arrive at a more absolute type of impurity than the mud or slime of a damp, overtrodden path in the outskirts of a manu-

facturing town. I do not say mud of the road, because that is mixed with animal refuse; but take merely an ounce or two of the blackest slime of a beaten footpath on a rainy day, near a large manufacturing town.

That slime we shall find in most cases composed of clay (or brick-dust, which is burnt clay) mixed with soot, a little sand, and water. All these elements are at helpless war with each other, and destroy reciprocally each other's nature and power, competing and fighting for place at every tread of your foot; — sand squeezing out clay, and clay squeezing out water, and soot meddling everywhere and defiling the whole. Let us suppose that this ounce of mud is left in perfect rest, and that its elements gather together, like to like, so that their atoms may get into the closest relations possible.

Let the clay begin. Ridding itself of all foreign substance, it gradually becomes a white earth, already very beautiful; and fit, with help of congealing fire, to be made into finest porcelain, and painted on, and be kept in kings' palaces. But such artificial consistence is not its best. Leave it still quiet to follow its own instinct of unity, and it becomes not only white, but clear; not only clear, but hard; not only clear and hard, but so set that it can deal with light in a wonderful way, and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it then a sapphire.

Such being the consummation of the clay, we give similar permission of quiet to the sand. It also becomes, first, a white earth, then proceeds to grow clear and hard, and at last arranges itself in mysterious, infinitely

fine, parallel lines, which have the power of reflecting not merely the blue rays, but the blue, green, purple, and red rays in the greatest beauty in which they can be seen through any fired material whatsoever. We call it then an opal.

In next order, the soot sets to work; it cannot make itself white at first, but, instead of being discouraged, tries harder and harder, and comes out clear at last, and the hardest thing in the world; and for the blackness that it had, obtains in exchange the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun at once in the vividest blaze that any solid thing can shoot. We call it then a diamond.

Last of all the water purifies or unites itself, contented enough if it only reach the form of a dew-drop; but if we insist on its proceeding to a more perfect consistence, it crystallizes into the shape of a star.

And for the ounce of slime which we had by political economy of competition, we have by political economy of co-operation, a sapphire, an opal, and a diamond, set in the midst of a star of snow. — Vol. v. pt. xiv. ch. i.

LIVING NATURE.

. . . This force, now properly called life, or breathing, or spirit, is continually creating its own shells of definite shape out of the wreck round it: and this is what I meant by saying in the "Ethics of the Dust," "You may always stand by Form against Force." For the mere force of junction is not spirit; but the power that catches out of chaos charcoal, water, lime, or what not, and fastens them down into a given form, is properly

called "spirit;" and we shall not diminish but strengthen our conception of this creative energy by recognizing its presence in lower states of matter than our own; such recognition being enforced upon us by a delight we instinctively receive from all the forms of matter which manifest it; and yet more, by the glorifying of those forms, in the parts of them that are most animated, with the colours that are pleasantest to our senses. The most familiar instance of this is the best, and also the most wonderful, the blossoming of plants.

The Spirit in the plant, — that is to say, its power of gathering dead matter out of the wreck round it, and shaping it into its own chosen shape, — is, of course, strongest at the moment of its flowering, for it then not only gathers, but forms, with the greatest energy.

And where this Life is in it at full power, its form becomes invested with aspects that are chiefly delightful to our own human passions; namely, first, with the loveliest outlines of shape; and, secondly, with the most brilliant phases of the primary colours, blue, yellow, and red, or white, the unison of all; and, to make it all more strange, this time of peculiar and perfect glory is associated with relations of the plants or blossoms to each other, correspondent to the joy of love in human creatures, and having the same object in the continuance of the race. Only, with respect to plants, as animals, we are wrong in speaking as if the object of this strong life were only the bequeathing of itself. The flower is the end or proper object of the seed, not the seed of the flower. The reason for seeds is that flowers may be;

not the reason of flowers that seeds may be. The flower itself is the creature which the spirit makes; only, in connection with its perfectness, is placed the giving birth to its successor. . . .

The main fact then about a flower is that it is the part of the plant's form developed at the moment of its intensest life: and this inner rapture is usually marked externally for us by the flush of one or more of the primary colours.

In all cases, the presence of the strongest life is asserted by characters, in which the human sight takes pleasure, and which seem prepared with distinct reference to us, or rather, bear, in being delightful, evidence of having been produced by the power of the same spirit as our own.

And we are led to feel this still more strongly because all the distinctions of species, both in plants and animals, appear to have similar connection with human character. Whatever the origin of species may be, or however these species, once formed, may be influenced by external accident, the groups into which birth or accident reduces them have distinct relation to the spirit of man. . . .

It is perfectly possible, and ultimately conceivable, that the crocodile and the lamb may have descended from the same ancestral atom of protoplasm; and that the physical laws of the operation of calcareous slime and of meadow grass on that protoplasm may in time have developed the opposite natures and aspects of the living frames; but the practically important fact for us

is the existence of a power which creates that calcareous earth itself; . . . and that the calcareous earth, soft, shall beget crocodiles, and, dry and hard, sheep; and that the aspects and qualities of these two products shall be, the one repellent to the spirit of man, the other attractive to it, in a quite inevitable way; representing to him states of moral evil and good; and becoming myths to him of destruction or redemption, and, in the most literal sense, "words" of God.

And the force of these facts cannot be escaped from by the thought that there are species innumerable, passing into each other by regular gradations, out of which we choose what we most love or dread, and say they were indeed prepared for us. . . .

Observe again and again, with respect to all these divisions and powers of plants; it does not matter in the least by what concurrences of circumstance or necessity they may gradually have been developed: the concurrence of circumstance is itself the supreme and inexplicable fact. We always come at last to a formative cause, which directs the circumstance, and mode of meeting it. If you ask an ordinary botanist the reason of the form of a leaf, he will tell you it is a "developed tubercle," and that its ultimate form "is owing to the directions of its vascular threads." But what directs its vascular threads? "They are seeking for something they want," he will probably answer. What made them want that? What made them seek for it thus? . . .

There is no answer. But the sum of it all is, that

over the entire surface of the earth and its waters, as influenced by the power of the air under solar lights, there is developed a series of changing forms, in clouds, plants, and animals, all of which have reference in their action, or nature, to the human intelligence that perceives them; and on which, in their aspects of horror or beauty, and their qualities of good and evil, there is engraved a series of myths, or words of the forming power, which, according to the true passion and energy of the human race, they have been enabled to read into religion. And this forming power has been by all nations partly confused with the breath or air through which it acts, and partly understood as a creative wisdom, proceeding from the supreme Deity; but entering into and inspiring all intelligences that work in harmony with Him. And whatever intellectual results may be in modern days obtained, by regarding this effluence only as a motion of vibration, every formative human act hitherto, and the best states of human happiness and order, have depended on the apprehension of its mystery (which is certain), and of its personality (which is probable). — *The Queen of the Air*, secs. 59–63, 88–89.

You may at least earnestly believe, that the presence of the spirit which culminates in your own life, shows itself in dawning, wherever the dust of the earth begins to assume any orderly and lovely state. You will find it impossible to separate this idea of gradated manifestation from that of the vital power. Things are not either

wholly alive, or wholly dead. They are less or more alive. Take the nearest, most easily examined instance — the life of a flower. Notice what a different degree and kind of life there is in the calyx and the corolla. The calyx is nothing but the swaddling clothes of the flower; the child-blossom is bound up in it, hand and foot; guarded in it, restrained by it, till the time of birth. The shell is hardly more subordinate to the germ in the egg, than the calyx to the blossom. It bursts at last; but it never lives as the corolla does. It may fall at the moment its task is fulfilled, as in the poppy; or wither gradually, as in the buttercup; or persist in a ligneous apathy, after the flower is dead, as in the rose; or harmonize itself so as to share in the aspect of the real flower, as in the lily; but it never shares in the corolla's bright passion of life. And the gradations which thus exist between the different members of organic creatures, exist no less between the different ranges of organism. We know no higher or more energetic life than our own; but there seems to me this great good in the idea of gradation of life — it admits the idea of a life above us, in other creatures, as much nobler than ours, as ours is nobler than that of the dust.

RUSKIN THE CRITIC OF ART.

"ALL true Art is praise. . . . Fix then in your mind as the guiding principle of all right practical labor, and source of all healthful life-energy, — that your art is to be the praise of something that you love. It may be only the praise of a shell or a stone; it may be the praise of a hero; it may be the praise of God; your rank as a living creature is determined by the height and breadth of your love; but, be you small or great, what healthy art is possible to you must be the expression of your true delight in a real thing, better than the art." —*The Laws of Fesolé.*

PRELUDE.

THESE are the words with which Mr. Ruskin introduces his book of guidance to the practice and principles of Art; well might they serve as motto to all those portions of his writings which treat of the beauty of the world as reproduced through human power. To him, the soul of art-force is Love and Obedience. Elsewhere he defines the artist: "An artist is a person who has submitted in his work to a law which it was painful to obey, that he may bestow by his work a delight which it is gracious to bestow." Thus he uplifts Technique itself into the sphere of the moral suggestion. To this method of spiritual interpretation he has from the first consistently adhered. In his earlier books, he formulates an æsthetic philosophy which rests entirely upon the principles of ethics; in his later, he proclaims a national morality as the necessary condition of art.

By this adoption of an ethical standard, Ruskin perma-

nently separates himself from a large, perhaps the largest, class of art-critics and æsthetic philosophers. The school which holds as its watchword, "Art for art's sake," conceives the nature of the subject and the religious spirit of the artist to be matter of indifference. To this school, the "morale" is entirely subordinate to brilliance, force, execution; or is at best valued only as an emotional stimulus. Men of this school inevitably stigmatize Mr. Ruskin's interpretation of art as sheer sentimentality. They recognize always reverently the great work he has done in detail; but they consider the general trend of that work to be vitiated by a false method. He appears to them an outsider, — preacher, not critic, at heart, — endeavoring to apply to art a principle which has no place there. Ruskin, although, as will be seen even from the following selections, he does not undervalue technical qualities, has, indeed, little in common with these gentlemen. In compensation, however, there is scarcely any other limit to the breadth of his artistic sympathies. His earliest work was written to defend modern painters, yet never had the artists of the past been interpreted to the English public with so loving an enthusiasm. He was himself ascetically religious in instinct, yet he has revealed, once and forever, the power of the great secular painters of Venice. Devotion to the Gothic as opposed to the Classic spirit was the central theme of the work of his youth; but in later life he has pondered with profound insight over the thought of Greece, and has made manifest to us new depths of meaning in her art and her mythology. It would be hard to name a school of worthily accredited art which Mr. Ruskin does not love, and which he has not caused us to love with a new intelligence.

THE GROUNDS OF ART.

HERE let me finally and firmly enunciate the great principle to which all that has hitherto been stated is subservient: — that art is valuable or otherwise, only as it expresses the personality, activity, and living perception of a good and great human soul; that it may express and contain this with little help from execution, and less from science; and that if it have not this, if it show not the vigor, perception, and invention of a mighty human spirit, it is worthless. Worthless, I mean, as *art;* it may be precious in some other way, but, as art, it is nugatory. Once let this be well understood among us, and magnificent consequences will soon follow. . . . By work of the soul, I mean the reader always to understand the work of the entire immortal creature, proceeding from a quick, perceptive, and eager heart perfected by the intellect, and finally dealt with by the hands, under the direct guidance of these higher powers. . . .

Whatever may be the means, or whatever the more immediate end of any kind of art, all of it that is good agrees in this, that it is the expression of one soul talking to another, and is precious according to the greatness of the soul that utters it. And consider what mighty consequences follow from our acceptance of this truth! what a key we have herein given us for the interpretation of the art of all time! For, as long as

we held art to consist in any high manual skill, or successful imitation of natural objects, or any scientific and legalized manner of performance whatever, it was necessary for us to limit our admiration to narrow periods and to few men. . . .

But let us once comprehend the holier nature of the art of man, and begin to look for the meaning of the spirit, however syllabled, and the scene is changed; and we are changed also. Those small and dexterous creatures whom we once worshipped, those fur-capped divinities with sceptres of camel's hair, peering and poring in their one-windowed chambers over the minute preciousness of the labored canvas; how are they swept away and crushed into unnoticeable darkness! And in their stead, as the walls of the dismal rooms that enclosed them and us are struck by the four winds of Heaven, and rent away, and as the world opens to our sight, lo! far back into all the depths of time, and forth from all the fields that have been sown with human life, how the harvest of the dragon's teeth is springing! how the companies of the gods are ascending out of the earth! The dark stones that have so long been the sepulchres of the thoughts of nations, and the forgotten ruins wherein their faith lay charnelled, give up the dead that were in them; and beneath the Egyptian ranks of sultry and silent rock, and amidst the dim golden lights of the Byzantine dome, and out of the confused and cold shadows of the Northern cloister, behold, the multitudinous souls come forth with singing, gazing on us with the soft eyes of newly comprehended sympathy,

and stretching their white arms to us across the grave, in the solemn gladness of everlasting brotherhood. — *Stones of Venice,* vol. iii., chap. iv.

Wherever art is practised for its own sake, and the delight of the workman is in what he *does* and *produces*, instead of in what he *interprets* or *exhibits*, — there art has an influence of the most fatal kind on brain and heart, and it issues, if long so pursued, in the *destruction both of intellectual power and moral principle ;* whereas art, devoted humbly and self-forgetfully to the clear statement and record of the facts of the universe, is always helpful and beneficent to mankind, full of comfort, strength, and salvation.

Now, when you were once well assured of this, you might logically infer another thing; namely, that when Art was occupied in the function in which she was serviceable, she would herself be strengthened by the service; and when she was doing what Providence without doubt intended her to do, she would gain in vitality and dignity just as she advanced in usefulness. On the other hand, you might gather that when her agency was distorted to the deception or degradation of mankind, she would herself be equally misled and degraded — that she would be checked in advance, or precipitated in decline.

And this is the truth also ; and holding this clew, you will easily and justly interpret the phenomena of history. So long as Art is steady in the contemplation and exhibition of natural facts, so long she herself lives and grows; and in her own life and growth partly

implies, partly secures, that of the nation in the midst of which she is practised. But a time has always hitherto come, in which, having thus reached a singular perfection, she begins to contemplate that perfection, and to imitate it, and deduce rules and forms from it; and thus to forget her duty and ministry as the interpreter and discoverer of Truth. And in the very instant when this diversion of her purpose and forgetfulness of her function take place — forgetfulness generally coincident with her apparent perfection — in that instant, I say, begins her actual catastrophe; and by her own fall — so far as she has influence — she accelerates the ruin of the nation by which she is practised. . . .

But I will ask your patience with me while I try to illustrate, in some farther particulars, the dependence of the healthy state and power of art itself upon the exercise of its appointed function in the interpretation of fact.

You observe that I always say *interpretation*, never *imitation*. My reason for doing so is, first, that good art rarely imitates; it usually only describes or explains. But my second and chief reason is that good art always consists of two things. First, the observation of fact; secondly, the manifesting of human design and authority in the way the fact is told. Great and good art must unite the two; it cannot exist for a moment but in their unity; it consists of the two as essentially as water consists of oxygen and hydrogen, or marble of lime and carbonic acid.

Let us inquire a little into the nature of each of the elements. The first element, we say, is the love of Nature, leading to the effort to observe and report her truly. And this is the first and leading element. Review for yourselves the history of art, and you will find this to be a manifest certainty, that no *great school ever yet existed which had not for primal aim the representation of some natural fact as truly as possible.* . . .

Wheresoever the search after truth begins, there life begins; wheresoever that search ceases, there life ceases. As long as a school of art holds any chain of natural facts, trying to discover more of them and express them better daily, it may play hither and thither as it likes on this side of the chain or that; it may design grotesques and conventionalisms, build the simplest buildings, serve the most practical utilities, yet all it does will be gloriously designed and gloriously done; but let it once quit hold of the chain of natural fact, cease to pursue that as the clew to its work; let it propose to itself any other end than preaching this living word, and think first of showing its own skill or its own fancy, and from that hour its fall is precipitate — its destruction sure; nothing that it does or designs will ever have life or loveliness in it more; its hour has come, and there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither it goeth. — *The Two Paths,* secs. 17–23.

THE IMAGINATION.

ASSOCIATIVE.

We find that the imagination has three totally distinct functions. It combines, and by combination creates new forms; but the secret principle of this combination has not been shown by the analysts. Again, it treats or regards both the simple images and its own combinations in peculiar ways; and, thirdly, it penetrates, analyzes, and reaches truths by no other faculty discoverable. . . .

It has been said that in composition the mind can only take cognizance of likeness or dissimilarity, or of abstract beauty, among the ideas it brings together. But neither likeness nor dissimilarity secures harmony. We saw in the chapter on Unity that likeness destroyed harmony or unity of membership; and that difference did not necessarily secure it, but only that particular *imperfection* in each of the harmonizing parts which can only be supplied by its fellow part. If, therefore, the combination made is to be harmonious, the artist must induce in each of its component parts (suppose two only, for simplicity's sake) such imperfection as that the other shall put it right. If one of them be perfect by itself, the other will be an excrescence. Both must be faulty when separate, and each corrected by

the presence of the other. If he can accomplish this, the result will be beautiful; it will be a whole, an organized body with dependent members; — he is an inventor. If not, let his separate features be as beautiful, as apposite, or as resemblant as they may, they form no whole. They are two members glued together. He is only a carpenter and joiner.

Now, the conceivable imperfections of any single feature are infinite. It is impossible, therefore, to fix upon a form of imperfection in the one, and try with this all the forms of imperfection of the other until one fits; but the two imperfections must be co-relatively and simultaneously conceived.

This is imagination, properly so called, imagination associative, the grandest mechanical power that the human intelligence possesses, and one which will appear more and more marvellous the longer we consider it. By its operation, two ideas are chosen out of an infinite mass (for it evidently matters not whether the imperfections be conceived out of the infinite number conceivable, or selected out of a number recollected), two ideas which are *separately wrong*, which together shall be right, and of whose unity, therefore, the idea must be formed at the instant they are seized, as it is only in that unity that either are good, and therefore only the *conception of that unity can prompt the preference.* Now, what is that prophetic action of mind, which, out of an infinite mass of things that cannot be tried together, seizes, at the same instant, two that are fit for each other, together right; yet each disagreeable alone? . . .

This operation would be wonderful enough, if it were concerned with two ideas only. But a powerfully imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant, not only two, but all the important ideas of its poem or picture; and while it works with any one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relations to it, never losing sight of their bearings on each other; as the motion of a snake's body goes through all parts at once, and its volition acts at the same instant in coils that go contrary ways.

This faculty is indeed something that looks as if man were made after the image of God. It is inconceivable, admirable, altogether divine; and yet wonderful as it may seem, it is palpably evident that no less an operation is necessary for the production of any great work: for, by the definition of Unity of Membership (the essential characteristic of greatness), not only certain couples or groups of parts, but *all* the parts of a noble work must be separately imperfect; each must imply and ask for all the rest, and the glory of every one of them must consist in its relation to the rest; neither while so much as one is wanting can any be right. . . .

The final tests, therefore, of the work of associative imagination are, its intense simplicity, its perfect harmony, and its absolute truth. It may be a harmony, majestic or humble, abrupt or prolonged, but it is always a governed and perfect whole; evidencing in all its relations the weight, prevalence, and universal dominion of an awful, inexplicable Power; a chastising, animating, and disposing Mind.

PENETRATIVE.

Thus far we have been defining that combining operation of the Imagination, which appears to be in a sort mechanical, yet takes place in the same inexplicable modes, whatever be the order of conception submitted to it, though I chose to illustrate it by its dealings with mere matter before taking cognizance of any nobler subjects of imagery. We must now examine the dealing of the Imagination with its separate conceptions, and endeavor to understand not only its principles of selection, but its modes of apprehension with respect to what it selects.

Such is always the mode in which the highest imaginative faculty seizes its materials. It never stops at crusts or ashes, or outward images of any kind; it ploughs them all aside, and plunges into the very central fiery heart; nothing else will content its spirituality; whatever semblances and various outward shows and phases its subject may possess, go for nothing; it gets within all fence, cuts down to the root, and drinks the very vital sap of that it deals with: once therein it is at liberty to throw up what new shoots it will, so always that the true juice and sap be in them, and to prune and twist them at its pleasure, and bring them to fairer fruit than grew on the old tree; but all this pruning and twisting is work that it likes not, and often does ill; its function and gift are the getting at the root, its nature and dignity depend on its holding things always by the heart. Take its hand from off the beat-

ing of that, and it will prophesy no longer; it looks not in the eyes, it judges not by the voice, it describes not by outward features; all that it affirms, judges, or describes, it affirms from within.

It may seem to the reader that I am incorrect in calling this penetrating, possession-taking faculty, Imagination. Be it so, the name is of little consequence; the faculty itself, called by what name we will, I insist upon as the highest intellectual power of man. There is no reasoning in it, it works not by algebra, nor by integral calculus, it is a piercing, pholas-like mind's tongue that works and tastes into the very rock heart; no matter what be the subject submitted to it, substance, or spirit; all is alike divided asunder, joint and marrow, whatever utmost truth, life, principle it has, laid bare; and that which has no truth, life, nor principle, dissipated into its original smoke at a touch. The whispers at men's ears it lifts into visible angels. Vials that have lain sealed in the deep sea a thousand years it unseals, and brings out of them Genii.

Every great conception of poet or painter is held and treated by this faculty. Every character that is so much as touched by men like Æschylus, Homer, Dante, or Shakespeare, is by them held by the heart; and every circumstance or sentence of their being, speaking, or seeming, is seized by process from within, and is referred to that inner secret spring of which the hold is never lost for an instant; so that every sentence, as it has been thought out from the heart, opens for us a way down to the heart, leads us to the centre, and then

leaves us to gather what more we may. It is the Open Sesame of a huge, obscure, endless cave, with inexhaustible treasure of pure gold scattered in it; the wandering about and gathering the pieces may be left to any of us, all can accomplish that; but the first opening of that invisible door in the rock is of the imagination only.

Hence there is in every word set down by the imaginative mind an awful under-current of meaning, and evidence and shadow upon it of the deep places out of which it has come. It is often obscure, often half told, for he who wrote it, in his clear seeing of the things beneath, may have been impatient of detailed interpretation; but if we choose to dwell upon it and trace it, it will lead us always securely back to that metropolis of the soul's dominion from which we may follow out all the ways and tracks to its farthest coasts.

I think the "Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante" of Francesca di Rimini, and the "He has no children" of Macduff are as fine instances as can be given; but the sign and mark of it are visible on every line of the four great men above instanced.

Now, in all these instances, let it be observed — for it is to that end alone that I have been arguing all along — that the virtue of the Imagination is its reaching, by intuition and intensity of gaze (not by reasoning, but by its authoritative opening and revealing power), a more essential truth than is seen at the surface of things. I repeat that it matters not whether the reader is willing to call this faculty Imagination or not; I do not care about the name; but I would be understood

when I speak of imagination hereafter, to mean this the base of whose authority and being is its perpetual thirst for truth and purpose to be true. It has no food, no delight, no care, no perception, except of truth; it is forever looking under masks, and burning up mists; no fairness of form, no majesty of seeming will satisfy it; the first condition of its existence is incapability of being deceived; and though it sometimes dwells upon and substantiates the fictions of fancy, yet its own operation is to trace to their farthest limit the true laws and likelihoods even of the fictitious creation. . . .

Finally, it is evident that, like the theoretic faculty, the imagination must be fed constantly by external nature — after the illustrations we have given, this may seem mere truism, for it is clear that to the exercise of the penetrative faculty a subject of penetration is necessary; but I note it because many painters of powerful mind have been lost to the world by their suffering the restless writhing of their imagination in its cage to take place of its healthy and exulting activity in the fields of nature. The most imaginative men always study the hardest, and are the most thirsty for new knowledge. Fancy plays like a squirrel in its circular prison, and is happy; but Imagination is a pilgrim on the earth — and her home is in heaven. Shut her from the fields of the celestial mountains — bar her from breathing their lofty, sun-warmed air; and we may as well turn upon her the last bolt of the Tower of Famine, and give the keys to the keeping of the wildest surge that washes Capraja and Gorgona.

CONTEMPLATIVE.

We have, in the two preceding chapters, arrived at definite conclusions respecting the power and essence of the imaginative faculty. In these two acts of penetration and combination, its separating and characteristic attributes are entirely developed; it remains for us only to observe a certain habit or mode of operation in which it frequently delights, and by which it addresses itself to our perceptions more forcibly, and asserts its presence more distinctly, than in those mighty but more secret workings wherein its life consists.

In our examination of the combining imagination, we chose to assume the first or simple conception to be as clear in the absence as in the presence of the object of it. This, I suppose, is, in point of fact, never the case, nor is an approximation to such distinctness of conception always a characteristic of the imaginative mind. Many persons have thorough and felicitous power of drawing from memory, yet never originate a thought nor excite an emotion. . . .

But on this indistinctness of conception, itself comparatively valueless and unaffecting, is based the operation of the imaginative faculty with which we are at present concerned, and in which its glory is consummated; whereby, depriving the subject of material and bodily shape, and regarding such of its qualities only as it chooses for particular purpose, it forges these qualities together in such groups and forms as it desires, and gives to their abstract being consistency and

reality, by striking them as it were with the die of an image belonging to other matter, which stroke having once received, they pass current at once in the peculiar conjunction and for the peculiar value desired.

Thus, in the description of Satan quoted in the first chapter, "And like a comet burned," the bodily shape of the angel is destroyed, the inflaming of the formless spirit is alone regarded; and this, and his power of evil associated in one fearful and abstract conception, are stamped to give them distinctness and permanence with the image of the comet, "that fires the length of Ophiuchus huge." Yet this could not be done, but that the image of the comet itself is in a measure indistinct, capable of awful expansion, and full of threatening and fear. Again, in his fall, the imagination gathers up the thunder, the resistance, the massy prostration, separates them from the external form, and binds them together by the help of that image of the mountain half-sunk; which again would be unfit but for its own indistinctness, and for that glorious addition "with all his pines," whereby a vitality and spear-like hostility are communicated to its falling form; and the fall is marked as not utter subversion, but sinking only, the pines remaining in their uprightness and unity, and threatening of darkness upon the descended precipice; and again in that yet more noble passage at the close of the fourth book, where almost every operation of the contemplative imagination is concentrated; the angelic squadron first gathered into one burning mass by the single expression "sharpening in mooned horns," then

told out in their unity and multitude and stooped hostility, by the image of the wind upon the corn; Satan endowed with godlike strength and endurance in that mighty line, "like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved," with infinitude of size the next instant, and with all the vagueness and terribleness of spiritual power, by the "horror plumed," and the "*what seemed* both spear and shield." . . .

We have now, I think, reviewed the various modes in which Imagination contemplative may be exhibited in art, and arrived at all necessary certainties respecting the essence of the faculty; which we have found in all its three functions, Associative of Truth, Penetrative of Truth, and Contemplative of Truth; and having no dealings nor relations with any kind of falsity. — *Modern Painters,* vol. ii. part iii. chaps. i.–iv.

THE TEMPER OF THE ARTIST.

Every great composition is in perfect harmony with all true rules, and involves thousands too delicate for ear, or eye, or thought to trace; still it is possible to reason, with infinite pleasure and profit, about these principles when the thing is once done; only, all our reasoning will not enable any one to do another thing like it, because all reasoning falls infinitely short of the divine instinct. Thus we may reason wisely over the way a bee builds its comb, and be profited by finding out certain things about the angles of it. But the bee knows nothing about those matters. It builds its comb in a far more inevitable way. And, from a bee to Paul Veronese,

all master-workers work with this awful, this inspired unconsciousness. . . .

Such, then, being the generally passive or instinctive character of right invention, it may be asked how these unmanageable instincts are to be rendered practically serviceable in historical or poetical painting, — especially historical, in which given facts are to be represented. Simply by the sense and self-control of the whole man; not by control of the particular fancy or vision. He who habituates himself, in his daily life, to seek for the stern facts in whatever he hears or sees, will have these facts again brought before him by the involuntary imaginative power in their noblest associations; and he who seeks for frivolities and fallacies, will have frivolities and fallacies again presented to him in his dreams. . . .

So, in the higher or expressive part of the work, the whole virtue of it depends on his being able to quit his own personality, and enter successively into the hearts and thoughts of each person; and in all this he is still passive: in gathering the truth he is passive, not determining what the truth to be gathered shall be, and in the after vision he is passive, not determining, but as his dreams will have it, what the truth to be represented shall be; only according to his own nobleness is his power of entering into the hearts of noble persons, and the general character of his dream of them.

It follows from all this, evidently, that a great idealist never can be egotistic. The whole of his power depends upon his losing sight and feeling of his own

existence, and becoming a mere witness and mirror of truth, and a scribe of visions, — always passive in sight, passive in utterance, — lamenting continually that he cannot completely reflect nor clearly utter all he has seen. Not by any means a proud state for a man to be in. But the man who has no invention is always setting things in order, and putting the world to rights, and mending, and beautifying, and pluming himself on his doings as supreme in all ways. — Vol. iii. part iv. chap. vii.

You must have the right moral state first, or you cannot have the art. But when the art is once obtained, its reflected action enhances and completes the moral state out of which it arose, and, above all, communicates the exaltation to other minds which are already morally capable of the like.

For instance, take the art of singing, and the simplest perfect master of it (up to the limits of his nature) whom you can find — a skylark. From him you may learn what it is to 'sing for joy.' You must get the moral state first, the pure gladness, then give it finished expression; and it is perfected in itself, and made communicable to other creatures capable of such joy. But it is incommunicable to those who are not prepared to receive it.

Now, all right human song is, similarly, the finished expression, by art, of the joy or grief of noble persons, for right causes. And accurately in proportion to the rightness of the cause, and purity of the emotion, is the possibility of the fine art. A maiden may sing of her lost love, but a miser cannot sing of his lost money.

And with absolute precision from highest to lowest, the fineness of the possible art is an index of the moral purity and majesty of the emotion it expresses. You may test it practically at any instant. Question with yourself concerning any feeling that has taken strong possession of your mind, "Could this be sung by a master, and sung nobly, with a true melody and art?" Then it is a right feeling. Could it not be sung at all, or only sung ludicrously? It is a base one. And that is so in all the arts; so that with mathematical precision, subject to no error or exception, the art of a nation, so far as it exists, is an exponent of its ethical state.

An exponent, observe, and exalting influence; but not the root or cause. You cannot paint or sing yourselves into being good men; you must be good men before you can either paint or sing, and then the colour and sound will complete in you all that is best. . . . As soon as we begin our real work, and you have learned what it is to draw a true line, I shall be able to make manifest to you — and indisputably so — that the day's work of a man like Mantegna or Paul Veronese consists of an unfaltering, uninterrupted succession of movements of the hand more precise than those of the finest fencer; the pencil leaving one point and arriving at another, not only with unerring precision at the extremity of the line, but with an unerring and yet varied course — sometimes over spaces a foot or more in extent — yet a course so determined everywhere that either of these men could, and Veronese often does, draw a finished profile, or any other portion of the contour of a

face, with one line, not afterwards changed. Try, first, to realize to yourselves the muscular precision of that action, and the intellectual strain of it; for the movement of a fencer is perfect in practised monotony; but the movement of the hand of a great painter is at every instant governed by direct and new intention. Then imagine that muscular firmness and subtlety, and the instantaneously selective and ordinant energy of the brain, sustained all day long, not only without fatigue, but with a visible joy in the exertion, like that which an eagle seems to take in the wave of his wings; and this all life long, and through long life, not only without failure of power, but with visible increase of it, until the actually organic changes of old age. And then consider, so far as you know anything of physiology, what sort of an ethical state of body and mind that means! — ethic through ages past! what fineness of race there must be to get it, what exquisite balance and symmetry of the vital powers! And then, finally, determine for yourselves whether a manhood like that is consistent with any viciousness of soul, with any mean anxiety, any gnawing lust, any wretchedness of spite or remorse, any consciousness of rebellion against law of God or man, or any actual, though unconscious, violation of even the least law to which obedience is essential for the glory of life, and the pleasing of its Giver. — *Lectures on Art*, secs. 66, 67, 68.

But also, remember, that the art-gift itself is only the result of the moral character of generations. A bad

woman may have a sweet voice; but that sweetness of voice comes of the past morality of her race. That she can sing with it at all, she owes to the determination of laws of music by the morality of the past. Every act, every impulse, of virtue and vice, affects in any creature, face, voice, nervous power, and vigour and harmony of invention, at once. Perseverance in rightness of human conduct, renders, after a certain number of generations, human art possible; every sin clouds it, be it ever so little a one; and persistent vicious living and following of pleasure render, after a certain number of generations, all art impossible. Men are deceived by the long-suffering of the laws of nature; and mistake, in a nation, the reward of the virtue of its sires for the issue of its own sins. The time of their visitation will come, and that inevitably; for, it is always true, that if the fathers have eaten sour grapes, the children's teeth are set on edge. And for the individual, as soon as you have learned to read, you may, as I said, know him to the heart's core, through his art. Let his art-gift be never so great, and cultivated to the height by the schools of a great race of men; and it is still but a tapestry thrown over his own being and inner soul; and the bearing of it will show, infallibly, whether it hangs on a man, or on a skeleton. If you are dim-eyed, you may not see the difference in the fall of the folds at first, but learn how to look, and the folds themselves will become transparent, and you shall see through them the death's shape, or the divine one, making the tissue above it as a cloud of light, or as a winding-sheet. — *The Queen of the Air*, sec. 107.

THREE SCHOOLS OF ART.

Artists, considered as searchers after truth, are to be divided into three great classes, a right, a left, and a centre. Those on the right perceive and pursue the good, and leave the evil; those in the centre, the greatest, perceive and pursue the good and evil together, the whole thing as it verily is: those on the left perceive and pursue the evil, and leave the good.

The first class, I say, take the good and leave the evil. Out of whatever is presented to them, they gather what it has of grace, and life, and light, and holiness, and leave all, or at least as much as possible, of the rest undrawn. The faces of their figures express no evil passions; the skies of their landscapes are without storm; the prevalent character of their colour is brightness, and of their chiaroscuro fulness of light. The early Italian and Flemish painters, Angelico and Hemling, Perugino, Francia, Raffaelle in his best time, John Bellini, and our own Stothard, belong eminently to this class.

The second, or greatest class, render all that they see in nature unhesitatingly, with a kind of divine grasp and government of the whole, sympathizing with all the good, and yet confessing, permitting, and bringing good out of the evil also. Their subject is infinite as nature, their colour equally balanced between splendor and sadness, reaching occasionally the highest degrees of both, and their chiaroscuro equally balanced between light and shade.

The principal men of this class are Michael Angelo,

Leonardo, Giotto, Tintoret, and Turner. Raffaelle in his second time, Titian and Rubens are transitional; the first inclining to the eclectic, and the last two to the impure class, Raffaelle rarely giving all the evil, Titian and Rubens rarely all the good.

The last class perceive and imitate evil only. They cannot draw the trunk of a tree without blasting and shattering it, nor a sky except covered with stormy clouds; they delight in the beggary and brutality of the human race; their colour is for the most part subdued or lurid, and the greatest part of their pictures are occupied by darkness.

Happily the examples of this class are seldom seen in perfection. Salvator Rosa and Caravaggio are the most characteristic: the other men belonging to it approach towards the central rank by imperceptible gradations, as they perceive and represent more and more of good. But Murillo, Zurbaran, Camillo Procaccini, Rembrandt, and Teniers all belong naturally to this lower class. . . .

Let us, then, endeavor briefly to mark the real relations of these three vast ranks of men, whom I shall call for convenience in speaking of them, Purists, Naturalists, and Sensualists. . . . The passions of which the end is the continuance of the race; the indignation which is to arm it against injustice, or strengthen it to resist wanton injury, and the fear which lies at the root of prudence, reverence, and awe, are all honorable and beautiful, so long as man is regarded in his relation to the existing world. The religious Purist, striving to conceive him withdrawn from those relations,

effaces from the countenance the traces of all transitory passion, illumines it with holy hope and love, and seals it with the serenity of heavenly peace; he conceals the forms of the body by the deep-folded garment, or else represents them under severely chastened types, and would rather paint them emaciated by the fast, or pale from the torture, than strengthened by exertion, or flushed by emotion. But the great Naturalist takes the human being in its wholeness, in its mortal as well as its spiritual strength. Capable of sounding and sympathizing with the whole range of its passions, he brings one majestic harmony out of them all; he represents it fearlessly in all its acts and thoughts, in its haste, its anger, its sensuality, and its pride, as well as in its fortitude or faith, but makes it noble in them all; he casts aside the veil from the body, and beholds the mysteries of its form like an angel looking down on an inferior creature: there is nothing that he is reluctant to behold, nothing that he is ashamed to confess; with all that lives, triumphing, falling, or suffering, he claims kindred, either in majesty or in mercy, yet standing, in a sort, afar off, unmoved even in the deepness of his sympathy, for the spirit within him is too thoughtful to be grieved, too brave to be appalled, and too pure to be polluted. — *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. chap. vi.

Purist Idealism results from the unwillingness of men whose dispositions are more than ordinarily tender and holy, to contemplate the various forms of definite evil which necessarily occur in the daily aspects of the

world around them. They shrink from them as from pollution, and endeavor to create for themselves an imaginary state, in which pain and imperfection do not exist or exist in some edgeless and enfeebled condition.

As, however, pain and imperfection are, by eternal laws, bound up with existence, so far as it is visible to us, the endeavor to cast them away invariably indicates a comparative childishness of mind, and produces a childish form of art. In general, the effort is most successful when it is most naïve, and when the ignorance of the draughtsman is in some frank proportion to his innocence. For instance, one of the modes of treatment, the most conducive to this ideal expression, is simply drawing everything without shadows, as if the sun were everywhere at once. This, in the present state of our knowledge, we could not do with grace, because we could not do it without fear or shame. But an artist of the thirteenth century did it with no disturbance of conscience, — knowing no better, or rather, in some sense we might say, knowing no worse. It is, however, evident, at first thought, that all representations of nature without evil must either be ideals of a future world, or be false ideals, if they are understood to be representations of facts. They can only be classed among the branches of the true ideal, in so far as they are understood to be nothing more than expressions of the painter's personal affections or hopes.

Let us take one or two instances in order clearly to explain our meaning.

The life of Angelico was almost entirely spent in the

endeavor to imagine the beings belonging to another world. By purity of life, habitual elevation of thought, and natural sweetness of disposition, he was enabled to express the sacred affections upon the human countenance as no one ever did before or since. In order to effect clearer distinction between heavenly beings and those of this world, he represents the former as clothed in draperies of the purest colour, crowned with glories of burnished gold, and entirely shadowless. With exquisite choice of gesture, and disposition of folds of drapery, this mode of treatment gives, perhaps, the best idea of spiritual beings which the human mind is capable of forming. It is, therefore, a true ideal; but the mode in which it is arrived at (being so far mechanical and contradictory of the appearances of nature) necessarily precludes those who practise it from being complete masters of their art. It is always childish, but beautiful in its childishness. . . .

It is finally to be remembered, therefore, that Purism is always noble when it is *instinctive*. It is not the greatest thing that can be done, but it is probably the greatest thing that the man who does it can do, provided it comes from his heart. True, it is a sign of weakness, but it is not in our choice whether we will be weak or strong; and there is a certain strength which can only be made perfect in weakness. If he is working in humility, fear of evil, desire of beauty, and sincere purity of purpose and thought, he will produce good and helpful things; but he must be much on his guard against supposing himself to be greater than his

fellows, because he has shut himself into this calm and cloistered sphere. His only safety lies in knowing himself to be, on the contrary, *less* than his fellows, and in always striving, so far as he can find it in his heart, to extend his delicate narrowness towards the great naturalist ideal. — *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. part iv. chap. vi.

We now enter on the consideration of that central and highest branch of ideal art which concerns itself simply with things as they ARE, and accepts, in all of them, alike the evil and the good. The question is, therefore, how the art which represents things simply as they are, can be called ideal at all. How does it meet that requirement stated in chap. iii. sec. iv. as imperative on all great art, that it shall be inventive, and a product of the imagination? It meets it pre-eminently by that power of arrangement which I have endeavored, at great length, and with great pains, to define accurately in the chapter on Imagination associative in the second volume. That is to say, accepting the weaknesses, faults, and wrongnesses in all things that it sees, it so places and harmonizes them that they form a noble whole, in which the imperfection of each several part is not only harmless, but absolutely essential, and yet in which whatever is good in each several part shall be completely displayed.

This operation of true idealism holds, from the least things to the greatest. For instance, in the arrangement of the smallest masses of colour, the false idealist,

or even the purist, depends upon perfecting each separate hue, and raises them all, as far as he can, into costly brilliancy; but the naturalist takes the coarsest and feeblest colours of the things around him, and so interweaves and opposes them that they become more lovely than if they had all been bright. So in the treatment of the human form, the naturalist will take it as he finds it; but, with such examples as his picture may rationally admit of more or less exalted beauty, he will associate inferior forms, so as not only to set off those which are most beautiful, but to bring out clearly what good there is in the inferior forms themselves; finally using such measure of absolute evil as there is commonly in nature, both for teaching and for contrast. . . .

And the greater the master of the ideal, the more perfectly true in *portraiture* will his individual figures be always found, the more subtle and bold his arts of harmony and contrast. This is a universal principle, common to all great art. Consider, in Shakspere, how Prince Henry is opposed to Falstaff, Falstaff to Shallow, Titania to Bottom, Cordelia to Regan, Imogen to Cloten, and so on; while all the meaner idealists disdain the naturalism, and are shocked at the contrasts. The fact is, a man who can see truth at all, sees it wholly, and neither desires nor dares to mutilate it. . . .

Now, therefore, observe the main conclusions which follow from these two conditions, attached always to art of this kind. First, it is to be taken straight from nature: it is to be the plain narration of something the painter or writer saw. Herein is the chief practical

difference between the higher and lower artists; a difference which I feel more and more every day that I give to the study of art. All the great men *see* what they paint before they paint it — see it in a perfectly passive manner, — cannot help seeing it if they would; whether in their mind's eye, or in bodily fact, does not matter; very often the mental vision is, I believe, in men of imagination, clearer than the bodily one; but vision it is, of one kind or another, — the whole scene, character, or incident, passing before them as in second sight, whether they will or no, and requiring them to paint it as they see it; they not daring, under the might of its presence, to alter one jot or tittle of it as they write it down or paint it down; it being to them in its own kind and degree always a true vision or Apocalypse, and invariably accompanied in their hearts by a feeling correspondent to the words, — "Write the things *which thou hast seen* and the things which *are*." — Vol. iii. part iv. chap. vii.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANDSCAPE ART.

You are all of you well aware that landscape seems hardly to have exercised any strong influence, as such, on any pagan nation, or pagan artist. I have no time to enter into any details on this, of course, most intricate and difficult subject; but I will only ask you to observe, that wherever natural scenery is alluded to by the ancients, it is either agriculturally, with the kind of feeling that a good Scotch farmer has; sensually, in the enjoyment of sun or shade, cool winds or sweet scents; fearfully, in a mere vulgar dread of rocks and desolate places, as compared with the comfort of cities; or, finally, superstitiously, in the personification or deification of natural powers. . . .

You will find, on the other hand, that the language of the Bible is specifically distinguished from all other early literature, by its delight in natural imagery; and that the dealings of God with His people are calculated peculiarly to awaken this sensibility within them. . . . Finally, Christ himself, setting the concluding example to the conduct and thoughts of men, spends nearly his whole life in the fields, the mountains, or the small country villages of Judea. . . . It would thus naturally follow, both from the general tone and teaching of the scriptures, and from the example of our Lord himself, that wherever Christianity was preached and accepted,

there would be an immediate interest awakened in the works of God, as seen in the natural world; and, accordingly, this is the second universal and distinctive character of Christian art, as distinguished from all pagan work, the first being a peculiar spirituality in its conception of the human form, preferring holiness of expression and strength of character to beauty of features or of body, and the second, as I say, its intense fondness for natural objects, — animals, leaves, and flowers, — inducing an immediate transformation of the cold and lifeless pagan ornamentation into vivid imagery of nature. Of course this manifestation of feeling was at first checked by the circumstances under which the Christian religion was disseminated. The art of the first three centuries is entirely subordinate. . . . The warfare in which Europe was perpetually plunged retarded this development for ages; but it steadily and gradually prevailed, working from the eighth to the eleventh century like a seed in the ground, showing little signs of life, but still, if carefully examined, changing essentially every day and every hour: at last, in the twelfth century, the blade appears above the black earth; in the thirteenth, the plant is in full leaf. . . .

The art of the thirteenth century is the foundation of all art, — nor merely the foundation, but the root of it; that is to say, succeeding art is not merely built upon it, but was all comprehended in it, and is developed out of it. Passing this great century, we find three successive branches developed from it, in each of the three

following centuries. The fourteenth century is pre-eminently the age of *Thought*, the fifteenth the age of *Drawing*, and the sixteenth the age of *Painting*. . . .

This, then, being the state of things respecting art in general, let us next trace the career of landscape through these centuries.

It was only towards the close of the thirteenth century that figure painting began to assume so perfect a condition as to require some elaborate suggestion of landscape background. Up to that time, if any natural object had to be represented, it was done in an entirely conventional way, as you see it upon Greek vases, or in a Chinese porcelain pattern. . . . But at the close of the thirteenth century, Giotto, and in the course of the fourteenth, Arcogna, sought, for the first time, to give some resemblance to nature in their backgrounds, and introduced behind their figures pieces of true landscape, formal enough still, but complete in intention, having foregrounds and distances, sky and water, forests and mountains, carefully delineated, not exactly in their true colour, but yet in colour approximating to the truth. The system which they introduced was observed for a long period by their pupils, and may be thus briefly described: the sky is always pure blue, paler at the horizon, and with a few streaky white clouds in it; the ground is green even to the extreme distance, with brown rocks projecting from it; water is blue streaked with white. The trees are nearly always composed of clusters of their proper leaves, relieved on a black or dark ground. . . . You will find that [the conditions of

noble conventionalism] always consist in *stopping short* of nature, not in falsifying nature; and thus in Giotto's foliage he *stops short* of the quantity of leaves on the real tree, but he gives you the form of the leaves represented with perfect truth. . . . To the landscape of Raphael, Leonardo, and Perugino, the advance consists principally in two great steps: the first, that distant objects were more or less invested with a blue colour, — the second, that trees were no longer painted with a black ground, but with a rich dark brown, or deep green. From Giotto's old age to the youth of Raphael the advance in and knowledge of landscape consisted of no more than these two simple steps; but the *execution* of landscape became infinitely more perfect and elaborate. . . . The first man who entirely broke through the conventionality of his time, and painted pure landscape, was Masaccio, but he died too young to effect the revolution of which his genius was capable. It was left for other men to accomplish, namely, for Correggio and Titian. These two painters were the first who relieved the foregrounds of their landscape from the grotesque, quaint, and crowded formalism of the early painters; and gave a close approximation to the forms of nature in all things, retaining, however, thus much of the old system, that the distances were for the most part painted in deep ultramarine blue, the foreground in rich green and brown. . . .

Now you see there remained a fourth step to be taken, — the doing away with conventionalism altogether, so as to create the perfect art of landscape painting. The

course of the mind of Europe was to do this; but at the very moment when it ought to have been done, the art of all civilized nations was paralyzed at once by the operation of the poisonous elements of infidelity and classical learning together, as I have endeavored to show elsewhere. In this paralysis, like a soldier shot as he is just gaining an eminence, the art of the seventeenth century struggled forward, and sank upon the spot it had been endeavoring to attain. The step which should have freed landscape from conventionalism was actually taken by Claude and Salvator Rosa, but taken in a state of palsy, — taken so as to lose far more than was gained. . . .

[The Claude and Salvator landscape] was, however, received with avidity; for this main reason, that the architecture, domestic life and manners of the period were gradually getting more and more artificial and were approximating to that horrible and lifeless condition in which you find them just before the outbreak of the French Revolution.

Now, observe, exactly as hoops, and starch, and false hair, and all that in mind and heart these things typify and betray, as these, I say, gained upon men, there was a necessary reaction in favor of the *natural.* Men had never lived so utterly in defiance of the laws of nature before; but they could not do this without feeling a strange charm in that which they defied; and, accordingly, we find this reactionary sentiment expressing itself in a base school of what was called *pastoral* poetry; that is to say, poetry written in praise of the

country, by men who lived in coffee-houses and on the Mall. The essence of pastoral poetry is the sense of strange delightfulness in grass, which is occasionally felt by a man who has seldom set his foot on it; it is essentially the poetry of the cockney, and for the most part corresponds in its aim and rank, as compared with other literature, to the porcelain shepherds and shepherdesses on a chimney-piece, as compared with great works of sculpture. . . .

It was in such a state of society that the landscape of Claude, Gaspar Poussin, and Salvator Rosa attained its reputation. It is the complete expression on canvas of the spirit of the time. . . .

It was, however, altogether impossible that this state of things should long continue. The age which had buried itself in formalism grew weary at last of the restraint, and the approach of a new era was marked by the appearance, and the enthusiastic reception, of writers who took true delight in those wild scenes of nature which had so long been despised. . . .

Together with Scott appeared the group of poets, — Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, and, finally, Tennyson, — differing widely in moral principles and spiritual temper, but all agreeing, more or less, in this love for natural scenery. . . .

In order to meet this new feeling for nature, there necessarily arose a new school of landscape painting. . . .

Turner was the first man who presented us with the *type* of perfect landscape art. . . .

I did not come here to tell you of my beliefs or my

conjectures: I came to tell you the truth which I have given fifteen years of my life to ascertain, that this man, this Turner, of whom you have known so little while he was living among you, will one day take his place beside Shakspeare and Verulam, in the annals of the light of England.

By Shakspeare, humanity was unsealed to you; by Verulam, the *principles* of nature; and by Turner, her *aspect*. All these were sent to unlock one of the gates of light, and to unlock it for the first time. But of all the three, though not the greatest, Turner was the most unprecedented in his work. Bacon did what Aristotle had attempted; Shakspeare did perfectly what Æschylus did partially; but none before Turner had lifted the veil from the face of nature; the majesty of the hills and forests had received no interpretation, and the clouds passed unrecorded from the fall of the heaven which they adorned, and of the earth to which they ministered. — *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, lect. iii.

THE SACRED COLOUR.

If you want to colour beautifully, colour as best pleases yourself at *quiet times*, not so as to catch the eye, nor to look as if it were clever or difficult to colour in that way, but so that the colour may be pleasant to you when you are happy, or thoughtful. Look much at the morning and evening sky, and much at simple flowers, — dog-roses, wood hyacinths, violets, poppies, thistles, heather, and such like — as Nature arranges them in the woods and fields. If ever any scientific person tells you that two colours are "discordant," make a note of the two colours and put them together whenever you can. I have actually heard people say that blue and green were discordant; the two colours which Nature seems to intend never to be separated, and never to be felt in either of them in its full beauty without the other! — a peacock's neck, or a blue sky through green leaves, or a blue wave with green lights through it, being precisely the loveliest things, next to clouds at sunrise, in this coloured world of ours. If you have a good eye for colours, you will soon find out how constantly Nature puts purple and green together, purple and scarlet, green and blue, yellow and neutral gray, and the like; and how she strikes these colour-concords for general tones, and then works into them with innumerable subordinate ones; and you will gradually

come to like what she does, and find out new and beautiful chords of colour in her work every day. If you *enjoy* them, depend upon it you will paint them to a certain point right: or, at least, if you do not enjoy them, you are certain to paint them wrong. If colour does not give you *intense* pleasure, let it alone; depend upon it, you are only tormenting the eyes and senses of people who feel colour, whenever you touch it; and that is unkind and improper. — *Elements of Drawing*, letter iii.

The fact is, we none of us enough appreciate the nobleness and sacredness of colour. Nothing is more common than to hear it spoken of as a subordinate beauty, — nay, even as the mere source of a sensual pleasure. . . .

Such expressions are used for the most part in thoughtlessness; and if the speakers would only take the pains to imagine what the world and their own existence would become, if the blue were taken from the sky, and the gold from the sunshine, and the verdure from the leaves, and the crimson from the blood which is the life of man, the flush from the cheek, the darkness from the eye, the radiance from the hair, — if they could but see for an instant, white human creatures living in a white world, — they would soon feel what they owe to colour. The fact is, that, of all God's gifts to the sight of man, colour is the holiest, the most divine, the most solemn. We speak rashly of gay colour, and sad colour, for colour cannot at once be good and gay. All good colour is in some degree pen-

sive, the loveliest is melancholy, and the purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love colour the most.

I know that this will sound strange in many ears, and will be especially startling to those who have considered the subject chiefly with reference to painting; for the great Venetian schools of colour are not usually understood to be either pure or pensive, and the idea of its pre-eminence is associated in nearly every mind with the coarseness of Rubens, and the sensualities of Correggio and Titian. But a more comparative view of art will soon correct this impression. It will be discovered, in the first place, that the more faithful and earnest the religion of the painter, the more pure and prevalent is the system of his colour. It will be found in the second place, that wherever colour becomes a primal intention with a painter otherwise mean and sensual, it instantly elevates him, and becomes the one sacred and saving element in his work. The very depth of the stoop to which the Venetian painters and Rubens sometimes condescend, is a consequence of their feeling confidence in the power of their colour to keep them from falling. They hold on by it, as by a chain let down from heaven, with one hand, though they may sometimes seem to gather dust and ashes with the other. And, in the last place, it will be found that so surely as a painter is irreligious, thoughtless, or obscene in disposition, so surely is his colouring cold, gloomy, and valueless. The opposite poles of art in this respect are Fra Angelico and Salvator Rosa; of whom the one was a man who smiled

seldom, wept often, prayed constantly, and never harbored an impure thought. His pictures are simply so many pieces of jewelry, the colours of the draperies being perfectly pure, as various as those of a painted window, chastened only by paleness, and relieved upon a gold ground. Salvator was a dissipated jester and satirist, a man who spent his life in masking and revelry. But his pictures are full of horror, and their colour is for the most part gloomy gray. Truly it would seem as if art had so much of eternity in it, that it must take its dye from the close rather than the course of life: — "In such laughter the heart of man is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness." . . .

Nor does it seem difficult to discern a noble reason for this universal law. In that heavenly circle which binds the statutes of colour upon the front of the sky, when it became the sign of the covenant of peace, the pure hues of divided light were sanctified to the human heart forever; nor this, it would seem, by mere arbitrary appointment, but in consequence of the foreordained and marvellous constitution of those hues into a sevenfold, or, more strictly still, a threefold order, typical of the Divine nature itself. — *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. chap. v.

Nature herself produces all her loveliest colours in some kind of solid or liquid glass or crystal. The rainbow is painted on a shower of melted glass, and the colours of the opal are produced in vitreous flint mixed with water; the green and blue, and golden or amber

brown of flowing water is in surface glassy, and in motion, "*splendidior vitro*." And the loveliest colours ever granted to human sight — those of morning or evening clouds before or after rain — are produced on minute particles of finely divided water, or perhaps sometimes, ice. But more than this. If you examine with a lens some of the richest colours of flowers, as, for instance, those of the gentian or dianthus, you will find their texture is produced by a crystalline or sugary frostwork upon them. In the lychnis of the high Alps, the red and white have a kind of sugary bloom, as rich as it is delicate. It is indescribable; but if you can fancy very powdery and crystalline snow mixed with the softest cream, and then dashed with carmine, it may give you some idea of the look of it. There are no colours, either in the nacre of shells, or the plumes of birds and insects, which are so pure as those of clouds, opal, or flowers; but the *force* of purple and blue in some butterflies, and the methods of clouding, and strength of burnished lustre, in plumage like the peacock's, give them more universal interest. . . .

We have thus in nature, chiefly obtained by crystalline conditions, a series of groups of entirely delicious hues; and it is one of the best signs that the bodily system is in a healthy state when we can see these clearly in their most delicate tints, and enjoy them fully and simply, with the kind of enjoyment that children have in eating sweet things. I shall place a piece of rock opal on the table in your working-room. If on fine days you will sometimes dip it in water, take

it into sunshine, and examine it with a lens of moderate power, you may always test your progress in sensibility to colour by the degree of pleasure that it gives you. . . .

You remember I told you, when the colourists painted masses or projecting spaces, they, aiming always at colour, perceived from the first and held to the last the fact that shadows, though of course darker than the lights with reference to which they *are* shadows, are not, therefore, necessarily less vigorous colours, but perhaps more vigorous. Some of the most beautiful blues and purples in nature, for instance, are those of mountains in shadow against amber sky; and the darkness of the hollow in the centre of a wild rose is one glow of orange fire, owing to the quantity of its yellow stamens.

Well, the Venetians always saw this, and all great colourists see it, and are thus separated from the non-colourists or schools of mere chiaroscuro, not by difference of style merely, but by being right while the others are wrong. It is an absolute fact that shadows are as much colours as lights are; and whoever represents them by merely the subdued or darkened tint of the light represents them falsely. I particularly want you to observe that this is no matter of taste, but fact. If you are especially sober-minded, you may, indeed, choose sober colours where Venetians would have chosen gay ones; that is a matter of taste; you may think it proper for a hero to wear a dress without patterns on it, rather than an embroidered one; that is similarly a matter of taste: but, though you may also think it would be dignified for a hero's limbs to be all black, or brown, on

the shaded side of them, yet, if you are using colour at all, you cannot so have him to your mind except by falsehood; he never, under any circumstances, could be entirely black or brown on one side of him.

In this, then, the Venetians are separate from other schools by rightness, and they are so to their last days. Venetian painting is in this matter always right. But also, in their early days, the colourists are separated from other schools by their contentment with tranquil cheerfulness of light; by their never wanting to be dazzled. None of their lights are flashing or blinding; they are soft, winning, precious; lights of pearl, not of lime: only, you know, on this condition, they cannot have sunshine: their day is the day of Paradise; they need no candle, neither light of the sun, in their cities; and everything is seen clear as through crystal, far or near.

This holds to the end of the fifteenth century. Then they begin to see that this, beautiful as it may be, is still a make-believe light; that we do not live in the inside of a pearl; but in an atmosphere through which a burning sun shines thwartedly, and over which a sorrowful night must far prevail. And then the chiaroscurists succeed in persuading them of the fact that there is mystery in the day as in the night, and show them how constantly to see truly, is to see dimly. And also they teach them the brilliancy of light, and the degree in which it is raised from the darkness; and, instead of their sweet and pearly peace, tempt them to look for the strength of flame and coruscation of lightning, and flash of sunshine on armour and on points of spears.

The noble painters take the lesson nobly, alike for gloom or flame. Titian with deliberate strength, Tintoret with stormy passion, read it, side by side. Titian deepens the hues of his Assumption, as of his Entombment, into a solemn twilight; Tintoret involves his earth in coils of volcanic cloud, and withdraws, through circle flaming above circle, the distant light of Paradise. Both of them, becoming naturalist and human, add the veracity of Holbein's intense portraiture to the glow and the dignity they had themselves inherited from the Masters of Peace: at the same moment another, as strong as they, and in pure felicity of art-faculty, even greater than they, but trained in a lower school, — Velasquez, — produced the miracles of colour and shadow-painting, which made Reynolds say of him, "What we all do with labour, he does with ease;" and one more, Correggio, uniting the sensual element of the Greek schools with their gloom, and their light with their beauty, and all these with the Lombardic colour, became, as since I think it has been admitted without question, the captain of the painter's art as such. Other men have nobler or more numerous gifts, but as a painter, master of the art of laying colour so as to be lovely, Correggio is alone.

I said the noble men learnt their lesson nobly. The base men also, and necessarily, learn it basely. The great men rise from colour to sunlight. The base ones fall from colour to candlelight. To-day, "*non ragioniam di lor*," but let us see what this great change which perfects the art of painting mainly consists in,

and means. For though we are only at present speaking of technical matters, every one of them, I can scarcely too often repeat, is the outcome and sign of a mental character, and you can only understand the folds of the veil, by those of the form it veils.

The complete painters, we find, have brought dimness and mystery into their method of colouring. That means that the world all round them has resolved to dream, or to believe, no more; but to know, and to see. And instantly all knowledge and sight are given, no more as in the Gothic times, through a window of glass, brightly, but as through a telescope-glass, darkly. Your cathedral window shut you from the true sky, and illumined you with a vision; your telescope leads you to the sky, but darkens its light, and reveals nebula beyond nebula, far and farther, and to no conceivable farthest — unresolvable. That is what the mystery means. — *Lectures on Art,* secs. 173–179.

THE CONDITIONS OF ART.

The changes in the state of this country are now so rapid, that it would be wholly absurd to endeavor to lay down laws of art education for it under its present aspect and circumstances; and therefore I must necessarily ask, how much of it do you seriously intend within the next fifty years to be coalpit, brickfield, or quarry? For the sake of distinctness of conclusion, I will suppose your success absolute: that from shore to shore the whole of the island is to be set as thick with chimneys as the masts stand in the docks of Liverpool: that there shall be no meadows in it; no trees; no gardens; only a little corn grown upon the housetops, reaped and threshed by steam: that you do not leave even room for roads, but travel either over the roofs of your mills, on viaducts; or under their floors, in tunnels: that, the smoke having rendered the light of the sun unserviceable, you work always by the light of your own gas: that no acre of English ground shall be without its shaft and its engine; and, therefore, no spot of English ground left, on which it shall be possible to stand, without a definite and calculable chance of being blown off it, at any moment, into small pieces.

Under these circumstances (if this is to be the future of England), no designing or any other development of beautiful art will be possible. Do not vex your minds,

nor waste your money with any thought or effort in the matter. Beautiful art can only be produced by people who have beautiful things around them, and leisure to look at them; and unless you provide some elements of beauty for your workmen to be surrounded by, you will find that no elements of beauty can be invented by them.

I was struck forcibly by the bearing of this great fact upon our modern efforts at ornamentation, in an afternoon walk last week, in the suburbs of one of our large manufacturing towns. I was thinking of the difference in the effect in the designer's mind, between the scene which I then came upon, and the scene which would have presented itself to the eyes of any designer of the middle ages when he left his workshop. Just outside the town I came upon an old English cottage, or mansion, I hardly know which to call it, set close under the hill, and beside the river, perhaps built somewhere in the Charles's times, with mullioned windows and a low arched porch; round which, in the little triangular garden, one can imagine the family as they used to sit in old summer times, the ripple of the river heard faintly through the sweet-brier hedge, and the sheep on the far-off wolds shining in the evening twilight. There, uninhabited for many and many a year, it had been left in unregarded havoc of ruin; the garden-gate still swung loose to its latch; the garden, blighted utterly into a field of ashes, not even a weed taking root there; the roof torn into shapeless rents; the shutters hanging about the windows in rags of rotten wood; before its

gate, the stream which had gladdened it now soaking slowly by, black as ebony, and thick with curdling slum; the bank above it trodden into unctuous sooty slime: far in front of it, between it and the old hills, the furnaces of the city foaming forth perpetual plague of sulphurous darkness; the volumes of their storm clouds coiling low over a waste of grassless fields, fenced from each other, not by hedges, but by slabs of square stone, like gravestones, riveted together with iron.

That was the scene for the designer's contemplation in his afternoon walk at Rochdale. Now fancy what was the scene which presented itself, in his afternoon walk, to a designer of the Gothic school of Pisa — Nino Pisano, or any of his men.

On each side of a bright river he saw rise a line of brighter palaces, arched and pillared, and inlaid with deep red porphyry, and with serpentine; along their quays before their gates were riding troops of knights, noble in face and form, dazzling in crest and shield; horse and man one labyrinth of quaint color and gleaming light — the purple, and silver, and scarlet fringes flowing over the strong limbs and clashing mail, like sea-waves over rocks at sunset. Opening on each side from the river were gardens, courts, and cloisters; long succession of white pillars among wreaths of vine; leaping of fountains through buds of pomegranate and orange: and still along the garden-paths, and under and through the crimson of the pomegranate shadows, moving slowly, groups of the fairest women that Italy ever saw — fairest because purest and thoughtfullest;

trained in all high knowledge, as in all courteous art — in dance, in song, in sweet wit, in lofty learning, in loftier courage, in loftiest love — able alike to cheer, to enchant, or save, the souls of men. Above all this scenery of perfect human life, rose dome and bell-tower burning with white alabaster and gold: beyond dome and bell-tower the slopes of mighty hills hoary with olive; far in the north, above a purple sea of peaks of solemn Apennine, the clear, sharp-cloven Carrara mountains sent up their steadfast flames of marble summit into amber sky; the great sea itself, scorching with expanse of light, stretching from their feet to the Gorgonian isles; and over all these, ever present, near or far — seen through the leaves of vine, or imaged with all its march of clouds in the Arno's stream, or set with its depth of blue close against the golden hair and burning cheek of lady and knight, — that untroubled and sacred sky, which was to all men, in those days of innocent faith, indeed the unquestioned abode of spirits, as the earth was of men; and which opened straight through its gates of cloud and veils of dew into the awfulness of the eternal world; — a heaven in which every cloud that passed was literally the chariot of an angel, and every ray of its Evening and Morning streamed from the throne of God.

What think you of that for a school of design?

I do not bring this contrast before you as a ground of hopelessness in our task; neither do I look for any possible renovation of the Republic of Pisa, at Bradford, in the nineteenth century; but I put it before you in

order that you may be aware precisely of the kind of difficulty you have to meet, and may then consider with yourselves how far you can meet it. To men surrounded by the depressing and monotonous circumstances of English manufacturing life, depend upon it, design is simply impossible. This is the most distinct of all the experiences I have had in dealing with the modern workman. He is intelligent and ingenious in the highest degree — subtle in touch and keen in sight: but he is, generally speaking, wholly destitute of designing power. And if you want to give him the power, you must give him the materials, and put him in the circumstances for it. Design is not the offspring of idle fancy: it is the studied result of accumulative observation and delightful habit. Without observation and experience, no design — without peace and pleasurableness in occupation, no design — and all the lecturings and teachings, and prizes, and principles of art, in the world, are of no use, so long as you don't surround your men with happy influences and beautiful things. It is impossible for them to have right ideas about colour, unless they see the lovely colours of nature unspoiled; impossible for them to supply beautiful incident and action in their ornament, unless they see beautiful incident and action in the world about them. Inform their minds, refine their habits, and you form and refine their designs; but keep them illiterate, uncomfortable, and in the midst of unbeautiful things, and whatever they do will still be spurious, vulgar, and valueless. — *The Two Paths*, secs. 89–92.

Let me now finally, and with all distinctness possible to me, state to you the main business of all Art; — its service in the actual uses of daily life.

You are surprised, perhaps, to hear me call this its main business. That is indeed so, however. The giving brightness to picture is much, but the giving brightness to life more. And remember, were it as patterns only, you cannot, without the realities, have the pictures. You cannot have a landscape by Turner, without a country for him to paint; you cannot have a portrait by Titian, without a man to be pourtrayed. I need not prove that to you, I suppose, in these short terms; but in the outcome I can get no soul to believe that the beginning of art is in getting our country clean and our people beautiful. I have been ten years trying to get this very plain certainty — I do not say believed — but even thought of, as anything but a monstrous proposition. To get your country clean, and your people lovely; — I assure you that is a necessary work of art to begin with! There has indeed been art in countries where people lived in dirt to serve God, but never in countries where they lived in dirt to serve the devil. There has indeed been art where the people were not at all lovely, — where even their lips were thick — and their skins black, because the sun had looked upon them; but never in a country where the people were pale with miserable toil and deadly shade, and where the lips of youth, instead of being full with blood, were pinched by famine, or warped with poison. And now, therefore, note this well, the gist of all these long prefatory talks.

I said that the two great moral instincts were those of Order and Kindness. Now, all the arts are founded on agriculture by the hand, and on the graces, and kindness of feeding, and dressing, and lodging your people. Greek art begins in the gardens of Alcinous — perfect order, leeks in beds, and fountains in pipes. And Christian art, as it arose out of chivalry, was only possible so far as chivalry compelled both kings and knights to care for the right personal training of their people; it perished utterly when those kings and knights became δημοβόροι, devourers of the people. And it will become possible again only, when, literally, the sword is beaten into the ploughshare, when your St. George of England shall justify his name, and Christian art shall be known, as its Master was, in breaking of bread. . . .

Now, I have given you my message, containing, as I know, offence enough, and itself, it may seem to many, unnecessary enough. But just in proportion to its apparent non-necessity, and to its certain offence, was its real need, and my real duty to speak it. . . . And therefore these are the things that I have first and last to tell you in this place: — that the fine arts are not to be learned by Locomotion, but by making the homes we live in lovely and by staying in them; — that the fine arts are not to be learned by Competition, but by doing our quiet best in our own way; — that the fine arts are not to be learned by Exhibition, but by doing what is right and making what is honest, whether it be exhibited or not; — and, for the sum of all, that men must paint and build neither for pride nor for money, but for

love; for love of their art, for love of their neighbour, and whatever better love may be than these, founded on these. . . . Begin with wooden floors; the tessellated ones will take care of themselves; begin with thatching roofs, and you shall end by splendidly vaulting them; begin by taking care that no old eyes fail over their Bibles, nor young ones over their needles, for want of rushlight, and then you may have whatever true good is to be got out of coloured glass or wax candles. And in thus putting the arts to universal use, you will find also their universal inspiration, their universal benediction. — *Lectures on Art*, secs. 116, 124.

RUSKIN THE STUDENT OF SOCIOLOGY.

"GOVERNMENT and Co-operation are in all things and eternally the Laws of Life. Anarchy and Competition eternally and in all things the Laws of Death." —*Modern Painters.*

PRELUDE.

IN the fifth volume of Modern Painters, Mr. Ruskin wrote this sentence. Stated in a general form, it escaped notice as a truism: applied and reiterated throughout his later writings, it has exposed him to the invective and ridicule of his age. For nearly thirty years, he has stood practically alone in England. Alone, but for one man, — the rugged prophet, Thomas Carlyle, whom Ruskin delights to call, with loving reverence, his "Master." Not only in emotional appeal and in attacks on social corruption does Ruskin resemble Carlyle. There is to be found in both men a body of positive teaching almost identical in proposal of practical methods and solutions. "Past and Present" is the best commentary on "Unto This Last."

Doubtless, one reason for the antagonism shown to Ruskin as an economist, was the impossibility of classifying him. He bewildered people. The English public understood a Tory: it understood a Radical. Ruskin was both and neither. He called himself a vehement Tory of the old school: yet he criticised the wage-system, which lies at the foundation of the present social order, like a Communist. He denounced liberty:

yet he hated oppression. No wonder that men shook their puzzled heads, and bewailed Ruskin's passion for paradox.

The paradox of one generation is the truism of the next. In some respects, Mr. Ruskin still remains inexplicable and unique. Few men would sympathize with his dislike of steam-machinery, or with other details of his theories. Yet, broadly speaking, the word has been found which explains and reconciles his seeming contradictions. That word is Socialism.

A Socialist, in the cruder sense, Ruskin is not. He disavows the title: and a passage such as that on page 176 shows how moderate and conservative a position he takes towards the inequalities of wealth. Yet a Socialist of the higher and of the Christian type he essentially is, for in the theory of Socialism alone can be found the harmony for which he pleads between radical and conservative elements of social thought.

On Ruskin's ideas as a whole, judgment cannot yet be passed. One fact is, however, certain. As regards his great central thesis, England has slowly been growing towards him. "May not the manufacture of Souls of a good quality be worthy our attention?" asked he, thirty years ago; and political economists scoffed at the sentimental thought that a moral and human element could enter as factor into the science of economics. To-day, the ground has changed: the Manchester school, with its mechanical and fixed system, based on universal self-interest, speaks more feebly: most thinkers at last agree that from the science of human relations, which economics really is, the human elements of love, of honour, of sacrifice cannot be excluded: and more and more all men are coming to recognize the literal and absolute truth, in finance as in morals, of the noble words which sum up Ruskin's teaching, "There is no Wealth but Life."

PRINCIPLES AND FACTS.

DEFINITIONS.

As domestic economy regulates the acts and habits of a household, political economy regulates those of a society or State, with reference to the means of its maintenance.

Political economy is neither an art nor a science; but a system of conduct and legislature, founded on the sciences, directing the arts, and impossible, except under certain conditions of moral culture. . . .

By the "maintenance" of a State is to be understood the support of its population in healthy and happy life; and the increase of their numbers, so far as that increase is consistent with their happiness. It is not the object of political economy to increase the numbers of a nation at the cost of common health or comfort; nor to increase indefinitely the comfort of individuals, by sacrifice of surrounding lives, or possibilities of life.

The assumption which lies at the root of nearly all erroneous reasoning on political economy, — namely, that its object is to accumulate money or exchangeable property, — may be shown in a few words to be without foundation. For no economist would admit national economy to be legitimate which proposed to itself only the building of a pyramid of gold. He would declare

the gold to be wasted, were it to remain in the monumental form, and would say it ought to be employed. But to what end? Either it must be used only to gain more gold, and build a larger pyramid, or for some purpose other than the gaining of gold. And this other purpose, however at first apprehended, will be found to resolve itself finally into the service of man; — that is to say, the extension, defence, or comfort of his life. The golden pyramid may perhaps be providently built, perhaps improvidently; but the wisdom or folly of the accumulation can only be determined by our having first clearly stated the aim of all economy, namely, the extension of life.

If the accumulation of money, or of exchangeable property, were a certain means of extending existence, it would be useless, in discussing economical questions, to fix our attention upon the more distant object — life — instead of the immediate one — money. But it is not so. Money may sometimes be accumulated at the cost of life, or by limitations of it; that is to say, either by hastening the deaths of men, or preventing their births. It is therefore necessary to keep clearly in view the ultimate object of economy; and to determine the expediency of minor operations with reference to that ulterior end.

It has been just stated that the object of political economy is the continuance not only of life, but of healthy and happy life. But all true happiness is both a consequence and cause of life: it is a sign of its vigor, and source of its continuance. All true suffering is in

like manner a consequence and cause of death. I shall therefore, in future, use the word "Life" singly: but let it be understood to include in its signification the happiness and power of the entire human nature, body and soul.

That human nature, as its Creator made it, and maintains it wherever His laws are observed, is entirely harmonious. No physical error can be more profound, no moral error more dangerous, than that involved in the monkish doctrine of the opposition of body to soul. No soul can be perfect in an imperfect body: no body perfect without perfect soul. Every right action and true thought sets the seal of its beauty on person and face; every wrong action and foul thought, its seal of distortion; and the various aspects of humanity might be read as plainly as a printed history, were it not that the impressions are so complex that it must always in some cases (and, in the present state of our knowledge, in all cases) be impossible to decipher them completely. Nevertheless, the face of a consistently just, and of a consistently unjust person, may always be rightly distinguished at a glance; and if the qualities are continued by descent through a generation or two, there arises a complete distinction of race. Both moral and physical qualities are communicated by descent, far more than they can be developed by education (though both may be destroyed by want of education); and there is as yet no ascertained limit to the nobleness of person and mind which the human creature may attain, by persevering observance of the laws of God respecting its birth and training.

We must therefore yet farther define the aim of political economy to be "The multiplication of human life at the highest standard." It might at first seem questionable whether we should endeavour to maintain a small number of persons of the highest type of beauty and intelligence, or a larger number of an inferior class. But I shall be able to show in the sequel, that the way to maintain the largest number is first to aim at the highest standard. Determine the noblest type of man, and aim simply at maintaining the largest possible number of persons of that class, and it will be found that the largest possible number of every healthy subordinate class must necessarily be produced also.

The perfect type of manhood, as just stated, involves the perfections (whatever we may hereafter determine these to be) of his body, affections, and intelligence. The material things, therefore, which it is the object of political economy to produce and use (or accumulate for use), are things which serve either to sustain and comfort the body, or exercise rightly the affections and form the intelligence. Whatever truly serves either of these purposes is "useful" to man, wholesome, healthful, helpful, or holy. By seeking such things, man prolongs and increases his life upon the earth.

On the other hand, whatever does not serve either of these purposes — much more whatever counteracts them — is in like manner useless to man, unwholesome, unhelpful, or unholy; and by seeking such things man shortens and diminishes his life upon the earth.

And neither with respect to things useful or useless

can man's estimate of them alter their nature. Certain substances being good for his food, and others noxious to him, what he thinks or wishes respecting them can neither change, nor prevent, their power. If he eats corn, he will live; if nightshade, he will die. If he produce or make good and beautiful things, they will *Re-Create* him (note the solemnity and weight of the word); if bad and ugly things, they will "corrupt," or "break in pieces," — that is, in the exact degree of their power, Kill him. For every hour of labour, however enthusiastic or well intended, which he spends for that which is not bread, so much possibility of life is lost to him. His fancies, likings, beliefs, however brilliant, eager, or obstinate, are of no avail if they are set on a false object. Of all that he has laboured for, the eternal law of heaven and earth measures out to him for reward, to the utmost atom, that part which he ought to have laboured for, and withdraws from him (or enforces on him, it may be), inexorably, that part which he ought not to have laboured for, until, on his summer threshing-floor, stands his heap of corn; little or much, not according to his labour, but to his discretion. No "commercial arrangements," no painting of surfaces, nor alloying of substances, will avail him a pennyweight. Nature asks of him calmly and inevitably, What have you found, or formed — the right thing or the wrong? By the right thing you shall live; by the wrong you shall die.

To thoughtless persons it seems otherwise. The world looks to them as if they could cozen it out of

some ways and means of life. But they cannot COZEN IT: they can only cozen their neighbours. The world is not to be cheated of a grain; not so much as a breath of its air can be drawn surreptitiously. For every piece of wise work done, so much life is granted; for every piece of foolish work, nothing; for every piece of wicked work, so much death is allotted. This is as sure as the courses of day and night. But when the means of life are once produced, men, by their various struggles and industries of accumulation or exchange, may variously gather, waste, restrain, or distribute them; necessitating, in proportion to the waste or restraint, accurately, so much more death. The rate and range of additional death are measured by the rate and range of waste; and are inevitable; — the only question (determined mostly by fraud in peace, and force in war) is, Who is to die, and how?

Such being the everlasting law of human existence, the essential work of the political economist is to determine what are in reality useful or life-giving things, and by what degrees and kinds of labour they are attainable and distributable. — *Munera Pulveris,* secs. 1–11.

ARRAIGNMENT.

There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to life. No one "knows how to live" till he has got them.

These are, Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful,

but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.

Admiration, the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope, the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbor, faithful, and satisfied.

There are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it has become a Science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy — the great "savoir mourir" — is doing with them.

The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life, and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. . . . But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than

laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells. . . .

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption; by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures; and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere, — is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will, by planting wisely and tending carefully; — drought, where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock; — beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools; — so full of fish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now, turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold its face out in the rain; and even *that* falls dirty.

Then for the third, Earth, — meant to be nourishing for you, and blossoming . . . as far as your scientific hands and scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful, instead of blossoming and life-giving, Dust, can contrive, you have turned the Mother Earth, Demeter, into the Avenger-Earth, Tisiphone — with the voice of your brother's blood crying out of it, in one wild harmony round all its murderous sphere.

That is what you have done for the Three Material Useful Things.

Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For Admiration, you have learned contempt and conceit. There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. . . .

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay for ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you (either politicians or workmen), as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the Founder of your religion to love your neighbour as yourselves.

You have founded an entire science of Political Economy, on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man — the desire to defraud his neighbor. — *Fors Clavigera,* letter v.

WEALTH AND LIFE.

I have spoken of the flowing of streams to the sea as a partial image of the action of wealth. In one respect it is not a partial, but a perfect image. The popular economist thinks himself wise in having discovered that wealth, or the forms of property in general, must go where they are required; that where demand is, supply must follow. He farther declares that this course of demand and supply cannot be forbidden by human laws. Precisely in the same sense, and with the same certainty,

the waters of the world go where they are required. Where the land falls, the water flows. The course neither of clouds nor rivers can be forbidden by human will. But the disposition and administration of them can be altered by human forethought. Whether the stream shall be a curse or a blessing, depends upon man's labour, and administrating intelligence. For centuries after centuries, great districts of the world, rich in soil, and favoured in climate, have lain desert under the rage of their own rivers; nor only desert, but plague-struck. The stream which, rightly directed, would have flowed in soft irrigation from field to field — would have purified the air, given food to man and beast, and carried their burdens for them on its bosom — now overwhelms the plain and poisons the wind; its breath pestilence, and its work famine. In like manner this wealth "goes where it is required." No human laws can withstand its flow. They can only guide it: but this, the leading trench and limiting mound can do so thoroughly, that it shall become water of life — the riches of the hand of wisdom; or, on the contrary, by leaving it to its own lawless flow, they may make it, what it has been too often, the last and deadliest of national plagues: water of Marah — the water which feeds the roots of all evil. — *Unto This Last*, iii.

It is impossible to conclude, of any given mass of acquired wealth, merely by the fact of its existence, whether it signifies good or evil to the nation in the midst of which it exists. Its real value depends on the moral sign attached to it, just as sternly as that of a

mathematical quantity depends on the algebraical sign attached to it. Any given accumulation of commercial wealth may be indicative, on the one hand, of faithful industries, progressive energies, and productive ingenuities; or, on the other, it may be indicative of mortal luxury; merciless tyranny, ruinous chicane. Some treasures are heavy with human tears, as an ill-stored harvest with untimely rain; and some gold is brighter in sunshine than it is in substance.

And these are not, observe, merely moral or pathetic attributes of riches, which the seeker of riches may, if he chooses, despise; they are, literally and sternly, material attributes of riches, depreciating or exalting, incalculably, the monetary signification of the sum in question. One mass of money is the outcome of action which has created, — another, of action which has annihilated, — ten times as much in the gathering of it; such and such strong hands have been paralyzed, as if they had been numbed by nightshade: so many strong men's courage broken, so many productive operations hindered; this and the other false direction given to labour, and lying image of prosperity set up, on Dura plains dug into seven-times-heated furnaces. That which seems to be wealth may in verity be only the gilded index of far-reaching ruin; a wrecker's handful of coin gleaned from the beach to which he has beguiled an argosy; a camp-follower's bundle of rags unwrapped from the breasts of goodly soldiers dead; the purchase-pieces of potter's fields, wherein shall be buried together the citizen and the stranger.

And therefore, the idea that directions can be given for the gaining of wealth, irrespectively of the consideration of its moral sources, or that any general and technical law of purchase and gain can be set down for national practice, is perhaps the most insolently futile of all that ever beguiled men through their vices. So far as I know, there is not in history record of anything so disgraceful to the human intellect as the modern idea that the commercial text, "Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," represents, or under any circumstances could represent, an available principle of national economy. Buy in the cheapest market? — yes; but what made your market cheap? Charcoal may be cheap among your roof timbers after a fire, and bricks may be cheap in your streets after an earthquake; but fire and earthquake may not therefore be national benefits. Sell in the dearest? — yes, truly; but what made your market dear? You sold your bread well to-day; was it to a dying man who gave his last coin for it, and will never need bread more, or to a rich man who to-morrow will buy your farm over your head; or to a soldier on his way to pillage the bank in which you have put your fortune?

None of these things you can know. One thing only you can know, namely, whether this dealing of yours is a just and faithful one, which is all you need concern yourself about respecting it; sure thus to have done your own part in bringing about ultimately in the world a state of things which will not issue in pillage or in death. And thus every question concerning these

things merges itself ultimately in the great question of justice, which, the ground being thus far cleared for it, I will enter upon in the next paper, leaving only, in this, three final points for the reader's consideration.

It has been shown that the chief value and virtue of money consists in its having power over human beings; that, without this power, large material possessions are useless, and to any person possessing such power, comparatively unnecessary. But power over human beings is attainable by other means than by money. As I said a few pages back, the money power is always imperfect and doubtful: there are many things which cannot be reached with it, others which cannot be retained by it. Many joys may be given to men which cannot be bought for gold, and many fidelities found in them which cannot be rewarded with it.

Trite enough, — the reader thinks. Yes: but it is not so trite, — I wish it were, — that in this moral power, quite inscrutable and immeasurable though it be, there is a monetary value just as real as that represented by more ponderous currencies. A man's hand may be full of invisible gold, and the wave of it, or the grasp, shall do more than another's with a shower of bullion. This invisible gold, also, does not necessarily diminish in spending. Political economists will do well some day to take heed of it, though they cannot take measure.

But farther. Since the essence of wealth consists in its authority over men, if the apparent or nominal wealth fail in this power, it fails in essence; in fact, ceases to be wealth at all. It does not appear lately in

England, that our authority over men is absolute. The servants show some disposition to rush riotously upstairs, under an impression that their wages are not regularly paid. We should augur ill of any gentleman's property to whom this happened every other day in his drawing-room.

So, also, the power of our wealth seems limited as respects the comfort of the servants, no less than their quietude. The persons in the kitchen appear to be ill-dressed, squalid, half-starved. One cannot help imagining that the riches of the establishment must be of a very theoretical and documentary character.

Finally. Since the essence of wealth consists in power over men, will it not follow that the nobler and the more in number the persons are over whom it has power, the greater the wealth? Perhaps it may even appear after some consideration, that the persons themselves *are* the wealth — that these pieces of gold with which we are in the habit of guiding them, are, in fact, nothing more than a kind of Byzantine harness or trappings, very glittering and beautiful in barbaric sight, wherewith we bridle the creatures; but that if these same living creatures could be guided without the fretting and jingling of the Byzants in their mouths and ears, they might themselves be more valuable than their bridles. In fact, it may be discovered that the true veins of wealth are purple — and not in Rock, but in Flesh — perhaps even that the final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-

hearted human creatures. Our modern wealth, I think, has rather a tendency the other way; — most political economists appearing to consider multitudes of human creatures not conducive to wealth, or at best conducive to it only by remaining in a dim-eyed and narrow-chested state of being.

Nevertheless, it is open, I repeat, to serious question, which I leave to the reader's pondering whether, among national manufactures, that of Souls of a good quality may not at last turn out a quite leadingly lucrative one? Nay, in some far-away and yet undreamed-of hour, I can even imagine that England may cast all thoughts of possessive wealth back to the barbaric nations among whom they first arose; and that, while the sands of the Indus and adamant of Golconda may yet stiffen the housings of the charger, and flash from the turban of the slave, she, as a Christian mother, may at last attain to the virtues and the treasures of a Heathen one, and be able to lead forth her sons, saying, —

"These are MY Jewels."

— *Unto This Last*, ii.

THE STATE AND THE WORKMAN.

The general principles by which employment should be regulated may be briefly stated as follows: —

1. There being three great classes of mechanical powers at our disposal, namely (*a*) vital or muscular power; (*b*) natural mechanical power of wind, water, and electricity; and (*c*) artificially produced mechanical

power; it is the first principle of economy to use all available vital power first, then the inexpensive natural forces, and only at last to have recourse to artificial power. And this, because it is always better for a man to work with his own hands to feed and clothe himself, than to stand idle while a machine works for him; and if he cannot, by all the labour healthily possible to him, feed and clothe himself, then it is better to use an inexpensive machine — as a wind-mill or water-mill — than a costly one like a steam-engine, so long as we have natural force enough at our disposal. Whereas at present we continually hear economists regret that the water-power of the cascades or streams of a country should be lost, but hardly ever that the muscular power of its idle inhabitants should be lost; and again, we see vast districts, as the south of Provence, where a strong wind blows steadily all day long for six days out of seven throughout the year, without a windmill, while men are continually employed a hundred miles to the north, in digging fuel to obtain artificial power. But the principal point of all to be kept in view is, that in every idle arm and shoulder throughout the country there is a certain quantity of force, equivalent to the force of so much fuel; and that it is mere insane waste to dig for coal for our force, while the vital force is unused; and not only unused, but, in being so, corrupting and polluting itself. We waste our coal, and spoil our humanity at one and the same instant. Therefore, wherever there is an idle arm, always save coal with it, and the stores of England will last all the longer. And precisely the same argument answers

the common one about "taking employment out of the hands of the industrious labourer." Why, what is "employment" but the putting out of vital force instead of mechanical force? We are continually in search of means of strength, — to pull, to hammer, to fetch, to carry; we waste our future resources to get this strength, while we leave all the living fuel to burn itself out in mere pestiferous breath, and production of its variously noisome forms of ashes! Clearly, if we want fire for force, we want men for force first. The industrious hands must already have so much to do that they can do no more, or else we need not use machines to help them. Then use the idle hands first. Instead of dragging petroleum with a steam-engine, put it on a canal, and drag it with human arms and shoulders. Petroleum cannot possibly be in a hurry to arrive anywhere. We can always order that, and many other things, time enough before we want it. So, the carriage of everything which does not spoil by keeping may most wholesomely and safely be done by water-traction and sailing vessels; and no healthier work can men be put to, nor better discipline, than such active porterage.

2. In employing all the muscular power at our disposal we are to make the employments we choose as educational as possible. For a wholesome human employment is the first and best method of education, mental as well as bodily. A man taught to plough, row, or steer well, and a woman taught to cook properly, and make a dress neatly, are already educated in many essential moral habits. Labour considered as a discipline has

hitherto been thought of only for criminals; but the real and noblest function of labour is to prevent crime, and not to be *Re*formatory, but Formatory.

The third great principle of employment is, that whenever there is pressure of poverty to be met, all enforced occupation should be directed to the production of useful articles only, that is to say, of food, of simple clothing, of lodging, or of the means of conveying, distributing, and preserving these. It is yet little understood by economists, and not at all by the public, that the employment of persons in a useless business cannot relieve ultimate distress. The money given to employ riband-makers at Coventry is merely so much money withdrawn from what would have employed lace-makers at Honiton: or makers of something else, as useless, elsewhere. We *must* spend our money in some way, at some time, and it cannot at any time be spent without employing somebody. If we gamble it away, the person who wins it must spend it; if we lose it in a railroad speculation, it has gone into some one else's pockets, or merely gone to pay navvies for making a useless embankment, instead of to pay riband or button makers for making useless ribands or buttons; we cannot lose it (unless by actually destroying it) without giving employment of some kind; and therefore, whatever quantity of money exists, the relative quantity of employment must some day come out of it; but the distress of the nation signifies that the employments given have produced nothing that will support its existence. Men cannot live on ribands, or buttons, or velvet, or by going quickly from place to place; and every

coin spent in useless ornament, or useless motion, is so much withdrawn from the national means of life. One of the most beautiful uses of railroads is to enable A to travel from the town of X to take away the business of B in the town of Y; while, in the mean time, B travels from the town of Y to take away A's business in the town of X. But the national wealth is not increased by these operations. Whereas every coin spent in cultivating ground, in repairing lodging, in making necessary and good roads, in preventing danger by sea or land, and in carriage of food or fuel where they are required, is so much absolute and direct gain to the whole nation. To cultivate land round Coventry makes living easier at Honiton, and every acre of land gained from the sea in Lincolnshire makes life easier all over England.

Fourth, and lastly. Since for every idle person, some one else must be working somewhere to provide him with clothes and food, and doing, therefore, double the quantity of work that would be enough for his own needs, it is only a matter of pure justice to compel the idle person to work for his maintenance himself. The conscription has been used in many countries, to take away labourers who supported their families, from their useful work, and maintain them for purposes chiefly of military display at the public expense. Since this has been long endured by the most civilized nations, let it not be thought that they would not much more gladly endure a conscription which should seize only the vicious and idle, already living by criminal procedures at the public expense; and which should discipline and educate them to labour

which would not only maintain themselves, but be serviceable to the commonwealth. The question is simply this: — we *must* feed the drunkard, vagabond, and thief; — but shall we do so by letting them steal their food, and do no work for it? or shall we give them their food in appointed quantity, and enforce their doing work which shall be worth it? and which, in process of time, will redeem their own characters, and make them happy and serviceable members of society? — *The Queen of the Air.*

FALLACIES.

PRODUCTION OF LUXURIES.

WHENEVER we spend money, we of course set people to work: that is the meaning of spending money; we may, indeed, lose it without employing anybody; but, whenever we spend it, we set a number of people to work, greater or less, of course, according to the rate of wages, but, in the long run, proportioned to the sum we spend. Well, your shallow people, because they see that however they spend money they are always employing somebody, and, therefore, doing some good, think and say to themselves, that it is all one how they spend it — that all their apparently selfish luxury is, in reality, unselfish, and is doing just as much good as if they gave all their money away, or perhaps more good; and I have heard foolish people even declare it as a principle of political economy, that whoever invented a new want conferred a good on the community. I have not words strong enough, — at least, I could not, without shocking you, use the words which would be strong enough, — to express my estimate of the absurdity and the mischievousness of this popular fallacy. So, putting a great restraint upon myself, and using no hard words, I will simply try to state the nature of it, and the extent of its influence.

Granted, that whenever we spend money for whatever purpose, we set people to work; and passing by, for the moment, the question whether the work we set them to is all equally healthy and good for them, we will assume that whenever we spend a guinea we provide an equal number of people with healthy maintenance for a given time. But, by the way in which we spend it, we entirely direct the labour of these people during that given time. We become their masters or mistresses, and we compel them to produce, within a certain period, a certain article. Now, that article may be a useful and lasting one, or it may be a useless and perishable one — it may be one useful to the whole community, or useful only to ourselves. And our selfishness and folly, or our virtue and prudence are shown, not by our spending money, but by our spending it for the wrong or the right thing; and we are wise and kind, not in maintaining a certain number of people for a given period, but only in requiring them to produce, during that period, the kind of things which shall be useful to society, instead of those which are only useful to ourselves.

Thus, for instance: if you are a young lady, and employ a certain number of sempstresses for a given time, in making a given number of simple and serviceable dresses — suppose, seven; of which you can wear one yourself for half the winter, and give six away to poor girls who have none, you are spending your money unselfishly. But if you employ the same number of sempstresses for the same number of days, in making four, or five, or six beautiful flounces for your own ball-

dress — flounces which will clothe no one but yourself, and which you will yourself be unable to wear at more than one ball — you are employing your money selfishly. You have maintained, indeed, in each case, the same number of people; but in the one case you have directed their labor to the service of the community; in the other case, you have consumed it wholly upon yourself. I don't say you are never to do so; I don't say you ought not sometimes to think of yourselves only, and to make yourselves as pretty as you can; only do not confuse coquettishness with benevolence, nor cheat yourselves into thinking that all the finery you can wear is so much put into the hungry mouths of those beneath you: it is not so; it is what you yourselves, whether you will or no, must sometimes instinctively feel it to be — it is what those who stand shivering in the streets, forming a line to watch you as you step out of your carriages, *know* it to be; those fine dresses do not mean that so much has been put into their mouths, but that so much has been taken out of their mouths. The real politico-economical signification of every one of these beautiful toilettes, is just this: that you have had a certain number of people put for a certain number of days wholly under your authority, by the sternest of slave-masters — hunger and cold; and you have said to them, "I will feed you, indeed, and clothe you, and give you fuel for so many days; but during those days you shall work for me only: your little brothers need clothes, but you shall make none for them: your sick friend needs clothes, but you shall make none for her:

you yourself will soon need another and a warmer dress, but you shall make none for yourself. You shall make nothing but lace and roses for me; for this fortnight to come, you shall work at the patterns and petals, and then I will crush and consume them away in an hour." You will perhaps answer, "It may not be particularly benevolent to do this, and we won't call it so; but at any rate we do no wrong in taking their labour when we pay them their wages: if we pay for their work, we have a right to it." No; — a thousand times no. The labour which you have paid for, does indeed become, by the art of purchase, your own labour: you have bought the hands and the time of those workers; they are, by right and justice, your own hands, your own time. But have you a right to spend your own time, to work with your own hands, only for your own advantage? — much more, when, by purchase, you have invested your own person with the strength of others; and added to your own life, a part of the life of others? You may, indeed, to a certain extent, use their labour for your delight: remember, I am making no general assertions against splendour of dress, or pomp of accessories of life; on the contrary, there are many reasons for thinking that we do not at present attach enough importance to beautiful dress, as one of the means of influencing general taste and character. But I *do* say, that you must weigh the value of what you ask these workers to produce for you in its own distinct balance: that on its own worthiness or desirableness rests the question of your kindness, and not merely on the fact of your having employed

people in producing it: and I say further, that as long as there are cold and nakedness in the land around you, so long there can be no question at all but that splendour of dress is a crime. In due time, when we have nothing better to set people to work at, it may be right to let them make lace and cut jewels; but as long as there are any who have no blankets for their beds, and no rags for their bodies, so long it is blanket-making and tailoring we must set people to work at — not lace.

And it would be strange, if at any great assembly which, while it dazzled the young and the thoughtless, beguiled the gentler hearts that beat beneath the embroidery, with a placid sensation of luxurious benevolence — as if by all that they wore in waywardness of beauty, comfort had been first given to the distressed, and aid to the indigent; it would be strange, I say, if, for a moment, the spirits of Truth and of Terror, which walk invisibly among the masques of the earth, would lift the dimness from our erring thoughts, and show us how, — inasmuch as the sums exhausted for that magnificence would have given back the failing breath to many an unsheltered outcast on moor and street — they who wear it have literally entered into partnership with Death, and dressed themselves in his spoils. Yes, if the veil could be lifted not only from your thoughts, but from your human sight, you would see — the angels do see — on those gay white dresses of yours, strange dark spots, and crimson patterns that you knew not of — spots of the inextinguishable red that all the seas cannot wash away; yes, and among the pleasant flowers that

crown your fair heads, and glow on your wreathed hair, you would see that one weed was always twisted which no one thought of — the grass that grows on graves. — *A Joy Forever*, i.

COMPETITION.

Supposing half a dozen or a dozen men were cast ashore from a wreck on an uninhabited island, and left to their own resources, one, of course, according to his capacity, would be set to one business and one to another; the strongest to dig and to cut wood, and to build huts for the rest; the most dexterous to make shoes out of bark and coats out of skins; the best educated to look for iron or lead in the rocks, and to plan the channels for the irrigation of the fields. But though their labours were thus naturally severed, that small group of shipwrecked men would understand well enough that the speediest progress was to be made by helping each other, — not by opposing each other: and they would know that this help could only be properly given, so long as they were frank and open in their relations, and the difficulties which each lay under properly explained to the rest. So that any appearance of secrecy or separateness in the actions of any of them would instantly, and justly, be looked upon with suspicion by the rest, as the sign of some selfish or foolish proceeding on the part of the individual. . . .

And, just as the best and richest result of wealth and happiness to the whole of them would follow on their perseverance in such a system of frank communication and of helpful labour; — so precisely the worst and poor-

est result would be obtained by a system of secrecy and of enmity; and each man's happiness and wealth would assuredly be diminished in proportion to the degree in which jealousy and concealment became their social and economical principles. It would not, in the long run, bring good, but only evil, to the man of science, if, instead of telling openly where he had found good iron, he carefully concealed every new bed of it, that he might ask, in exchange for the rare ploughshare, more corn from the farmer, or, in exchange for the rude needle, more labour from the sempstress: and it would not ultimately bring good, but only evil, to the farmers, if they sought to burn each other's corn-stacks, that they might raise the value of their grain, or if the sempstresses tried to break each other's needles, that each might get all the stitching to herself.

Now these laws of human action are precisely as authoritative in their application to the conduct of a million of men, as to that of six or twelve. All enmity, jealousy, opposition, and secrecy are wholly, and in all circumstances, destructive in their nature — not productive; and all kindness, fellowship, and communicativeness are invariably productive in their operation, — not destructive; and the evil principles of opposition and exclusiveness are not rendered less fatal, but more fatal, by their acceptance among large masses of men; more fatal, I say, exactly in proportion as their influence is more secret. For though the opposition does always its own simple, necessary, direct quantity of harm, and withdraws always its own simple, necessary, measurable

quantity of wealth from the sum possessed by the community, yet, in proportion to the size of the community, it does another and more refined mischief than this, by concealing its own fatality under aspects of mercantile complication and expediency, and giving rise to multitudes of false theories, based on a mean belief in narrow and immediate appearances of good done here and there by things which have the universal and everlasting nature of evil. So that the time and powers of the nation are wasted, not only in wretched struggling against each other, but in vain complaints, and groundless discouragements, and empty investigations, and useless experiments in laws, and elections, and inventions; with hope always to pull wisdom through some new-shaped slit in a ballot-box, and to drag prosperity down out of the clouds along some new knot of electric wire; while all the while Wisdom stands calling at the corners of the streets, and the blessing of Heaven waits ready to rain down upon us, deeper than the rivers and broader than the dew, if only we will obey the first plain principles of humanity, and the first plain precepts of the skies: "Execute true judgment and show mercy and compassion every man to his brother; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart."

Therefore, I believe most firmly that as the laws of national prosperity get familiar to us, we shall more and more cast our toil into social and communicative systems. —*A Joy Forever*, ii.

JUSTICE AND EQUALITY.

This distinction between rich and poor rests on two bases. Within its proper limits, on a basis which is lawful and everlastingly necessary; beyond them, on a basis unlawful, and everlastingly corrupting the frame-work of society. The lawful basis of wealth is, that a man who works should be paid the fair value of his work; and that if he does not choose to spend it to-day, he should have free leave to keep it, and spend it to-morrow. Thus, an industrious man working daily, and laying by daily, attains at last the possession of an accumulated sum of wealth, to which he has absolute right. The idle person who will not work, and the wasteful person who lays nothing by, at the end of the same time will be doubly poor — poor in possession, and dissolute in moral habit; and he will then naturally covet the money which the other has saved. And if he is then allowed to attack the other, and rob him of his well-earned wealth, there is no more any motive for saving, or any reward for good conduct; and all society is thereupon dissolved, or exists only in systems of rapine. Therefore the first necessity of social life is the clearness of national conscience in enforcing the law — that he should keep who has JUSTLY EARNED.

That law, I say, is the proper basis of distinction between rich and poor. But there is also a false basis of distinction; namely, the power held over those who are earning wealth by those who already possess it, and only use it to gain more. There will be always a

number of men who would fain set themselves to the accumulation of wealth as the sole object of their lives. Necessarily, that class of men is an uneducated class, inferior in intellect, and more or less cowardly. It is physically impossible for a well-educated, intellectual, or brave man to make money the chief object of his thoughts; just as it is for him to make his dinner the principal object of them. All healthy people like their dinners, but their dinner is not the main object of their lives. So all healthily minded people like making money — ought to like it, and to enjoy the sensation of winning it; but the main object of their life is not money; it is something better than money. . . . But in every nation, as I said, there are a vast class who are ill-educated, cowardly, and more or less stupid. And with these people, just as certainly the fee is first, and the work second, as with brave people the work is first, and the fee second. And this is no small distinction. It is between life and death *in* a man; between heaven and hell *for* him. You cannot serve two masters; — you *must* serve one or other. If your work is first with you, and your fee second, work is your master, and the lord of work, who is God. But if your fee is first with you, and your work is second, fee is your master, and the lord of fee, who is the Devil; and not only the Devil, but the lowest of devils — the 'least erected fiend that fell.' So there you have it in brief terms: Work first — you are God's servants; Fee first — you are the Fiend's. And it makes a difference, now and ever, believe me, whether you serve Him who has on

His vesture and thigh written, 'King of Kings,' and whose service is perfect freedom; or him on whose vesture and thigh the name is written, 'Slave of Slaves,' and whose service is perfect slavery.

However, in every nation there are, and must always be, a certain number of these Fiend's servants, who have it principally for the object of their lives to make money. They are always, as I said, more or less stupid, and cannot conceive of anything else so nice as money. Stupidity is always the basis of the Judas bargain. We do great injustice to Iscariot, in thinking him wicked above all common wickedness. He was only a common money-lover, and, like all money-lovers, didn't understand Christ; — couldn't make out the worth of Him, or meaning of Him. He never thought He would be killed. He was horror-struck when he found that Christ would be killed; threw his money away instantly, and hanged himself. How many of our present money-seekers, think you, would have the grace to hang themselves, whoever was killed? But Judas was a common, selfish, muddle-headed, pilfering fellow; his hand always in the bag of the poor, not caring for them. Helpless to understand Christ, he yet believed in Him, much more than most of us do; had seen Him do miracles, thought He was quite strong enough to shift for Himself, and he, Judas, might as well make his own little bye-perquisites out of the affair. Christ would come out of it well enough, and he have his thirty pieces. Now, that is the money-seeker's idea all over the world. He doesn't hate Christ, but can't understand

Him — doesn't care for Him — sees no good in that benevolent business; makes his own little job out of it at all events, come what will. And thus, out of every mass of men, you have a certain number of bag-men — your 'fee-first' men, whose main object is to make money. And they do make it — make it in all sorts of unfair ways, chiefly by the weight and force of money itself, or what is called the power of capital; that is to say, the power which money, once obtained, has over the labour of the poor, so that the capitalist can take all its produce to himself, except the labourer's food. That is the modern Judas's way of 'carrying the bag,' and 'bearing what is put therein.' — *The Crown of Wild Olive*, secs. 31–33.

As to the distribution of the hard work. None of us, or very few of us, do either hard or soft work because we think we ought; but because we have chanced to fall into the way of it, and cannot help ourselves. Now, nobody does anything well that they cannot help doing: work is only done well when it is done with a will; and no man has a thoroughly sound will unless he knows he is doing what he should, and is in his place. And, depend upon it, all work must be done at last, not in a disorderly, scrambling, doggish way, but in an ordered, soldierly, human way — a lawful or 'legal' way. Men are enlisted for the labour that kills — the labour of war: they are counted, trained, fed, dressed, and praised for that. Let them be enlisted also for the labour that feeds: let them be counted, trained, fed, dressed, praised

for that. Teach the plough exercise as carefully as you do the sword exercise, and let the officers of troops of life be held as much gentlemen as the officers of troops of death; and all is done: but neither this, nor any other right thing, can be accomplished — you can't even see your way to it — unless, first of all, both servant and master are resolved that, come what will of it, they will do each other justice. People are perpetually squabbling about what will be best to do, or easiest to do, or advisablest to do, or profitablest to do; but they never, so far as I hear them talk, ever ask what it is *just* to do. And it is the law of heaven that you shall not be able to judge what is wise or easy, unless you are first resolved to judge what is just, and to do it. That is the one thing constantly reiterated by our Master — the order of all others that is given oftenest — 'Do justice and judgment.' That's your Bible order; that's the 'Service of God,' not praying nor psalm-singing. You are told, indeed, to sing psalms when you are merry, and to pray, when you need anything; and, by the perverseness of the evil spirit in us, we get to think that praying and psalm-singing are 'service.' If a child finds itself in want of anything, it runs in and asks its father for it — does it call that doing its father a service? If it begs for a toy or a piece of cake — does it call that serving its father? That, with God, is prayer, and He likes to hear it: He likes you to ask him for cake when you want it; but He doesn't call that 'serving Him.' Begging is not serving: God likes mere beggars as little as you do — He likes honest servants, not beggars. So when a child loves its father

very much, and is very happy, it may sing little songs about him; but it doesn't call that, serving its father; neither is singing songs about God, serving God. It is enjoying ourselves, if it's anything; most probably it is nothing; but if it's anything, it is serving ourselves, not God. And yet we are impudent enough to call our beggings and chauntings 'Divine Service:' we say 'Divine service will be "performed"' (that's our word — the form of it gone through) 'at so and so o'clock.' Alas! — unless we perform Divine service in every willing act of life, we never perform it at all. The one Divine work — the one ordered sacrifice — is to do justice; and it is the last we are ever inclined to do. Anything rather than that! As much charity as you choose, but no justice. 'Nay,' you will say, 'charity is greater than justice.' Yes, it is greater, it is the summit of justice — it is the temple of which justice is the foundation. But you can't have the top without the bottom; you cannot build upon charity. You must build upon justice, for this main reason, that you have not at first, charity to build with. It is the last reward of good work. Do justice to your brother (you can do that, whether you love him or not), and you will come to love him. But do injustice to him, because you don't love him; and you will come to hate him. It is all very fine to think you can build upon charity to begin with; but you will find all you have got to begin with, begins at home, and is essentially love of yourself. You well-to-do people, for instance, who are here to-night, will go to 'Divine service' next Sunday, all nice and tidy, and your little children will have their tight little Sunday

boots on, and lovely little Sunday feathers in their hats; and you think complacently, and piously, how lovely they look going to church in their best! So they do: and you love them heartily, and you like sticking feathers in their hats. That's all right: that *is* charity; but it is charity beginning at home. Then you will come to the poor little crossing-sweeper, got up also, — it, in its Sunday dress, — the dirtiest rags it has, — that it may beg the better: you will give it a penny, and think how good you are, and how good God is to prefer *your* child to the crossing-sweeper, and to bestow on it a divine hat, feather, and boots, and the pleasure of giving pence, instead of begging for them. That's charity going abroad. But what does justice say, walking and watching near us? Christian Justice has been strangely mute, and seemingly blind; and, if not blind, decrepit, this many a day: she keeps her accounts still, however — quite steadily — doing them at nights, carefully, with her bandage off, and through acutest spectacles (the only modern scientific invention she cares about). You must put your ear down ever so close to her lips to hear her speak; and then you will start at what she first whispers, for it will certainly be, 'Why shouldn't that little crossing-sweeper have a feather on its head, as well as your own child?' Then you may ask Justice, in an amazed manner, 'How she can possibly be so foolish as to think children could sweep crossings with feathers on their heads? Then you stoop again, and Justice says — still in her dull, stupid way — 'Then, why don't you, every other Sunday, leave your child to sweep the crossing, and

take the little sweeper to church in a hat and feather?' Mercy on us (you think), what will she say next! And you answer, of course, that 'you don't, because everybody ought to remain content in the position in which Providence has placed them.' Ah, my friends, that's the gist of the whole question. *Did* Providence put them in that position, or did *you?* You knock a man into a ditch, and then you tell him to remain content in the 'position in which Providence has placed him.' That's modern Christianity. You say '*We* did not knock him into the ditch.' We shall never know, what you have done, or left undone, until the question with us every morning is, not how to do the gainful thing, but how to do the just thing during the day, nor until we are at least so far on the way to being Christian, as to acknowledge that maxim of the poor half-way Mahometan, 'One hour in the execution of justice is worth seventy years of prayer.' — *The Crown of Wild Olive,* secs. 38–40.

Now the establishment of inequality cannot be shown in the abstract to be either advantageous or disadvantageous to the body of the nation. The rash and absurd assumption that such inequalities are necessarily advantageous, lies at the root of most of the popular fallacies on the subject of political economy. For the eternal and inevitable law in this matter is, that the beneficialness of the inequality depends, first, on the methods by which it was accomplished, and, secondly, on the purposes to which it is applied. Inequalities of wealth, unjustly established, have assuredly injured the nation

in which they exist during their establishment; and, unjustly directed, injure it yet more during their existence. But inequalities of wealth justly established, benefit the nation in the course of their establishment; and, nobly used, aid it yet more by their existence. That is to say, among every active and well-governed people, the various strength of individuals, tested by full exertion and specially applied to various need, issues in unequal, but harmonious results, receiving reward or authority according to its class and service; while in the inactive or ill-governed nation, the gradations of decay and the victories of treason work out also their own rugged system of subjection and success; and substitute, for the melodious inequalities of concurrent power, the iniquitous dominances and depressions of guilt and misfortune. — *Unto This Last,* ii.

PROSPECT AND PRESENT DUTY.

Men can neither drink steam, nor eat stone. The maximum of population on a given space of land implies also the relative maximum of edible vegetable, whether for men or cattle; it implies a maximum of pure air; and of pure water. Therefore: a maximum of wood, to transmute the air, and of sloping ground, protected by herbage from the extreme heat of the sun, to feed the streams. All England may, if it so chooses, become one manufacturing town; and Englishmen, sacrificing themselves to the good of general humanity, may live diminished lives in the midst of noise, of darkness, and of deadly exhalation. But the world cannot become a factory, nor a mine. No amount of ingenuity will ever make iron digestible by the million, nor substitute hydrogen for wine. Neither the avarice nor the rage of men will ever feed them, and however the apple of Sodom and the grape of Gomorrah may spread their table for a time with dainties of ashes, and nectar of asps, — so long as men live by bread, the far-away valleys must laugh as they are covered with the gold of God, and the shouts of His happy multitudes ring round the wine-press and the well.

Nor need our more sentimental economists fear the too wide spread of the formalities of a mechanical agriculture. The presence of a wise population implies

the search for felicity as well as for food; nor can any population reach its maximum but through that wisdom which "rejoices" in the habitable parts of the earth. The desert has its appointed place and work; the eternal engine, whose beam is the earth's axle, whose beat is its year, and whose breath is its ocean, will still divide imperiously to their desert kingdoms, bound with unfurrowable rock, and swept by unarrested sand, their powers of frost and fire: but the zones and the lands between habitable, will be loveliest in habitation. The desire of the heart is also the light of the eyes. No scene is continually and untiringly loved, but one rich of joyful human labour: smooth in field; fair in garden; full in orchard; trim, sweet, and frequent in homestead; ringing with voices of vivid existence. No air is sweet that is silent; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under sound — triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned words of men, and wayward trebles of childhood. As the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary: — the wild flower by the wayside, as well as the tended corn; and the wild birds and creatures of the forest, as well as the tended cattle; because man doth not live by bread only, but also by the desert manna; by every wondrous word and unknowable work of God. Happy, in that he knew them not, nor did his fathers know; and that round about him reaches yet into the infinite, the amazement of his existence.

Note, finally, that all effectual advancement towards

this true felicity of the human race must be by individual, not public effort. Certain general measures may aid, certain revised laws guide, such advancement; but the measure and law which have first to be determined are those of each man's home. . . .

All true economy is 'Law of the house.' Strive to make that law strict, simple, generous: waste nothing, and grudge nothing. Care in nowise to make more of money, but care to make much of it; remembering always the great, palpable, inevitable fact — the rule and root of all economy — that what one person has, another cannot have; and that every atom of substance, of whatever kind, used or consumed, is so much human life spent; which, if it issue in the saving present life, or gaining more, is well spent, but if not, is either so much life prevented, or so much slain. In all buying, consider, first, what condition of existence you cause in the producers of what you buy; secondly, whether the sum you have paid is just to the producer, and in due proportion, lodged in his hands; thirdly, to how much clear use, for food, knowledge, or joy, this that you have bought can be put; and fourthly, to whom and in what way it can be most speedily and serviceably distributed: in all dealings whatsoever insisting on entire openness and stern fulfilment; and in all doings, on perfection and loveliness of accomplishment; especially on fineness and purity of all marketable commodity; watching at the same time for all ways of gaining or teaching, powers of simple pleasure; and of showing "ὅσον ἐν ἀσφοδέλῳ γέγ' ὄνειαρ"; the sum of enjoyment depending

not on the quantity of things tasted, but on the vivacity and patience of taste.

And if, on due and honest thought over these things, it seems that the kind of existence to which men are now summoned by every plea of pity and claim of right, may, for some time at least, not be a luxurious one; — consider whether, even supposing it guiltless, luxury would be desired by any of us, if we saw clearly at our sides the suffering which accompanies it in the world. Luxury is indeed possible in the future — innocent and exquisite; luxury for all, and by the help of all; but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant: the cruelest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfold. Raise the veil boldly; face the light; and if, as yet, the light of the eye can only be through tears, and the light of the body through sackcloth, go thou forth weeping, bearing precious seed, until the time come, and the kingdom, when Christ's gift of bread and bequest of peace shall be Unto this last as unto thee; and when, for earth's severed multitudes of the wicked and the weary, there shall be holier reconciliation than that of the narrow home, and calm economy, where the Wicked cease — not from trouble, but from troubling — and the Weary are at rest. — *Unto This Last*, iv.

THE MERCHANT CHIVALRY.

PHILOSOPHICALLY, it does not, at first sight, appear reasonable (many writers have endeavoured to prove it unreasonable) that a peaceable and rational person, whose trade is buying and selling, should be held in less honour than an unpeaceable and often irrational person, whose trade is slaying. Nevertheless, the consent of mankind has always, in spite of the philosophers, given precedence to the soldier.

And this is right.

For the soldier's trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain. This, without well knowing its own meaning, the world honours it for. A bravo's trade is slaying; but the world has never respected bravos more than merchants; the reason it honours the soldier is, because he holds his life at the service of the State. Reckless he may be — fond of pleasure or of adventure — all kinds of bye-motives and mean impulses may have determined the choice of his profession, and may affect, (to all appearance exclusively) his daily conduct in it; but our estimate of him is based on this ultimate fact — of which we are well assured — that, put him in a fortress breach, with all the pleasures of the world behind him, and only death and his duty in front of him, he will keep his face to the front; and he knows that this choice may be put to him at any moment, and has beforehand taken

his part — virtually takes such part continually — does, in reality, die daily.

Not less is the respect we pay to the lawyer and physician, founded ultimately on their self-sacrifice. Whatever the learning or acuteness of a great lawyer, our chief respect for him depends on our belief that, set in a judge's seat, he will strive to judge justly, come of it what may. Could we suppose that he would take bribes, and use his acuteness and legal knowledge to give plausibility to iniquitous decisions, no degree of intellect would win for him our respect. Nothing will win it short of our tacit conviction, that in all important acts of his life, justice is first with him; his own interest, second.

In the case of a physician, the ground of the honour we render him is clearer still. Whatever his science, we should shrink from him in horror if we found him regard his patients merely as subjects to experiment upon; much more, if we found that, receiving bribes from persons interested in their deaths, he was using his best skill to give poison in the mask of medicine.

Finally, the principle holds with utmost clearness as it respects clergymen. No goodness of disposition will excuse want of science in a physician or of shrewdness in an advocate; but a clergyman, even though his power of intellect be small, is respected on the presumed ground of his unselfishness and serviceableness.

Now there can be no question but that the tact, foresight, decision, and other mental powers, required for the successful management of a large mercantile concern,

if not such as could be compared with those of a great lawyer, general, or divine, would at least match the general conditions of mind required in the subordinate officers of a ship, or of a regiment, or in the curate of a country parish. If, therefore, all the efficient members of the so-called liberal professions are still, somehow, in public estimate of honour, preferred before the head of a commercial firm, the reason must lie deeper than in the measurement of their several powers of mind.

And the essential reason for such preference will be found to lie in the fact that the merchant is presumed to act always selfishly. His work may be very necessary to the community: but the motive of it is understood to be wholly personal. The merchant's first object in all his dealings must be (the public believe) to get as much for himself, and leave as little to his neighbour (or customer) as possible. Enforcing this upon him, by political statute, as the necessary principle of his action; recommending it to him on all occasions, and themselves reciprocally adopting it; proclaiming vociferously, for law of the universe, that a buyer's function is to cheapen, and a seller's to cheat, — the public, nevertheless, involuntarily condemn the man of commerce for his compliance with their own statement, and stamp him for ever as belonging to an inferior grade of human personality.

This they will find, eventually, they must give up doing. They must not cease to condemn selfishness; but they will have to discover a kind of commerce which is not exclusively selfish. Or, rather, they will have to dis-

cover that there never was, or can be, any other kind of commerce; that this which they have called commerce was not commerce at all, but cozening; and that a true merchant differs as much from a merchant according to laws of modern political economy, as the hero of the Excursion from Autolycus. They will find that commerce is an occupation which gentlemen will every day see more need to engage in, rather than in the businesses of talking to men, or slaying them; that, in true commerce, as in true preaching or true fighting, it is necessary to admit the idea of occasional voluntary loss; — that sixpences have to be lost as well as lives, under a sense of duty; that the market may have its martyrdoms as well as the pulpit; and trade its heroisms as well as war.

May have — in the final issue, must have — and only has not had yet, because men of heroic temper have always been misguided in their youth into other fields, not recognizing what is in our days, perhaps, the most important of all fields; so that while many a zealous person loses his life in trying to teach the form of a gospel, very few will lose a hundred pounds in showing the practice of one.

The fact is, that people never have had clearly explained to them the true functions of a merchant with respect to other people. I should like the reader to be very clear about this.

Five great intellectual professions, relating to daily necessities of life, have hitherto existed — three exist necessarily, in every civilized nation:

The Soldier's profession is to *defend* it.

The Pastor's, to *teach* it.

The Physician's, to *keep it in health.*

The Lawyer's, to *enforce justice* in it.

The Merchant's, to *provide* for it.

And the duty of all these men is, on due occasion, to *die* for it.

'On due occasion,' namely: —

The Soldier, rather than leave his post in battle.

The Physician, rather than leave his post in plague.

The Pastor, rather than teach Falsehood.

The Lawyer, rather than countenance Injustice.

The Merchant — What is *his* 'due occasion' of death?

It is the main question for the merchant, as for all of us. For truly, the man who does not know when to die, does not know how to live.

Observe, the merchant's function (or manufacturer's, for in the broad sense in which it is here used, the word must be understood to include both) is to provide for the nation. It is no more his function to get profit for himself out of that provision than it is a clergyman's function to get his stipend. The stipend is a due and necessary adjunct, but not the object of his life, if he be a true clergyman, any more than his fee (or *honorarium*) is the object of life to a true physician. Neither is his fee the object of life to a true merchant. All three, if true men, have a work to be done irrespective of fee — to be done even at any cost, or, for quite the contrary of fee; the pastor's function being to teach, the physician's to

heal, and the merchant's, as I have said, to provide. That is to say, he has to understand to their very root the qualities of the thing he deals in, and the means of obtaining or producing it; and he has to apply all his sagacity and energy to the producing or obtaining it in perfect state, and distributing it at the cheapest possible price where it is most needed.

And because the production or obtaining of any commodity involves necessarily the agency of many lives and hands, the merchant becomes in the course of his business the master and governor of large masses of men in a more direct, though less confessed way, than a military officer or pastor; so that on him falls, in great part, the responsibility for the kind of life they lead: and it becomes his duty, not only to be always considering how to produce what he sells in the purest and cheapest forms, but how to make the various employments involved in the production, or transference of it, most beneficial to the men employed.

And as into these two functions, requiring for their right exercise the highest intelligence, as well as patience, kindness, and tact, the merchant is bound to put all his energy, so for their just discharge he is bound, as soldier or physician is bound, to give up, if need be, his life, in such way as may be demanded of him. Two main points he has in his providing function to maintain: first, his engagements (faithfulness to engagements being the real root of all possibilities in commerce); and, secondly, the perfectness and purity of the thing provided; so that, rather than fail in any engagement, or consent to any

deterioration, adulteration, or unjust and exorbitant price of that which he provides, he is bound to meet fearlessly any form of distress, poverty, or labour, which may, through maintenance of these points, come upon him. — *Unto This Last,* i.

ST. GEORGE'S GUILD.

THE CREED AND RESOLUTION.

I. I TRUST in the Living God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things and creatures visible and invisible.

I trust in the kindness of His law, and the goodness of His work.

And I will strive to love Him, and keep His law, and see His work, while I live.

II. I trust in the nobleness of human nature, in the majesty of its faculties, the fulness of its mercy, and the joy of its love.

And I will strive to love my neighbor as myself, and, even when I cannot, will act as if I did.

III. I will labour, with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread; and all that my hand finds to do, I will do with my might.

IV. I will not deceive, or cause to be deceived, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor hurt, or cause to be hurt, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor rob, or cause to be robbed, any human being for my gain or pleasure.

V. I will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life, and guard and perfect all natural beauty, upon the earth.

VI. I will strive to raise my own body and soul daily into higher powers of duty and happiness; not in rivalship or contention with others, but for the help, delight, and honour of others, and for the joy and peace of my own life.

VII. I will obey all the laws of my country faithfully; and the orders of its monarch, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its monarch, so far as such laws or commands are consistent with what I suppose to be the law of God; and when they are not, or seem in any wise to need change, I will oppose them loyally and deliberately, not with malicious, concealed, or disorderly violence.

VIII. And with the same faithfulness, and under the limits of the same obedience, which I render to the laws of my country, and the commands of its rulers, I will obey the laws of the Society called of St. George, into which I am this day received; and the orders of its masters, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its masters, so long as I remain a Companion, called of St. George. — *Fors Clavigera*, letter lv.

THE PROMISE.

1. To do your own work well, whether it be for life or death.

2. To help other people at theirs, when you can, and to avenge no injury.

3. To be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.

THE PROJECT.

We will try to make some small piece of English ground beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle, but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it; but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons: no equality upon it; but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or in boats; we will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields, — and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it, and sing it; perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. — *Fors Clavigera*, letter v.

Whatever piece of land we begin work upon, we shall treat thoroughly at once, putting unlimited manual labor on it, until we have every foot of it under as strict care as a flower-garden: and the labourers shall be paid sufficient, unchanging wages; and their children educated compulsorily in agricultural schools inland, and naval

schools by the sea, the indispensable first condition of such education being that the boys learn either to ride or to sail; the girls to spin, weave, and sew, and at a proper age to cook all ordinary food exquisitely; the youth of both sexes to be disciplined daily in the strictest practice of vocal music; and for morality, to be taught gentleness to all brute creatures, — finished courtesy to each other, — to speak truth with rigid care, and to obey orders with the precision of slaves. Then, as they get older, they are to learn the natural history of the place they live in, — to know Latin, girls and boys both, — and the history of five cities; Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London. — *Fors Clavigera*, letter viii.

In the history of the five cities I named, they shall learn, so far as they can understand, what has been beautifully and bravely done; and they shall know the lives of the heroes and heroines in truth and naturalness; and shall be taught to remember the greatest of them on the days of their birth and death; so that the year shall have its full calendar of reverent Memory. And, on every day, part of their morning service shall be a song in honour of the hero whose birthday it is; and part of their evening service, a song of triumph for the fair death of one whose death-day it is: and in their first learning of notes they shall be taught the great purpose of music, which is to say a thing that you mean deeply, in the strongest and clearest possible way; and they shall never be taught to sing what they don't mean.

They shall be able to sing merrily when they are happy, and earnestly when they are sad; but they shall find no mirth in mockery, nor in obscenity; neither shall they waste or profane their hearts with artificial and lascivious sorrow. . . .

To divert a little of the large current of English charity and justice from watching disease to guarding health, and from the punishment of crime to the reward of virtue; to establish, here and there, exercise grounds instead of hospitals, and training-schools instead of penitentiaries, is not, if you will slowly take it to heart, a frantic imagination. — *Fors Clavigera,* letter ix.

The St. George's Company is to be a band of delivering knights — not of churls needing deliverance; of eager givers and servants — not of eager beggars and persons needing service. It is only the Rich and the Strong whom I receive for Companions, — those who come not to be ministered unto but to minister. Rich, yet some of them in other kind of riches than the world's; strong, yet some in other than the world's strength. But this much, at least, of literal strength and power they *must* have, — the power, and formed habit of self-support. — *Fors Clavigera,* letter lxiii.

It is the work of a world-wide monastery; protesting by patient, not violent, deed, and fearless, yet henceforward unpassionate, word, against the evil of this our day, till in its heat and force it be ended.

Of which evil I here resume the entire assertion made in *Fors,* up to this time, in few words.

All social evils and religious errors arise out of the pillage of the labourer by the idler: the idler leaving him only enough to live on (and even that miserably), and taking all the rest of the produce of his work to spend in his own luxury, or in the toys with which he beguiles his idleness.

And this is done, and has from time immemorial been done, in all so-called civilized, but in reality corrupted, countries, — first by the landlords; then, under their direction, by the three chief, so-called gentlemanly "professions," of soldier, lawyer, and priest; and lastly by the merchant and usurer. . . . All this has to cease inevitably and totally. Peace, Justice, and the Word of God must be *given* to the people, not sold. And these *can* only be given by a true Hierarchy and Royalty, beginning at the throne of God, and descending, by sacred stair, let down from heaven, to bless and keep all the Holy creatures of God, man and beast, and to condemn and destroy the unholy. And in this Hierarchy and Royalty all the servants of God have part, being made priests and kings to Him, That they may feed His people with food of angels and food of men; teaching the word of God with power, and breaking and pouring the Sacrament of Bread and Wine from house to house, in remembrance of Christ, and with gladness and singleness of heart; the priest's function at the altar and in the tabernacle, at one end of the village, being only holy in the fulfilment of the deacon's function at the table, and in the taberna, at the other.

And so, out of the true earthly kingdom, in fulness of

time, shall come the heavenly kingdom, when the tabernacle of God shall be with men; no priest needed more for ministry, because all the earth will be temple; nor bread nor wine needed more for mortal food, or fading memory, but the water of life given to him that is athirst, and the fruits of the trees of healing. — *Fors Clavigera*, letter lxxxiv.

RUSKIN THE TEACHER OF ETHICS.

THIS is the thing which I KNOW — and which, if you labour faithfully, you shall know also, — that in Reverence is the chief joy and power of life; — Reverence, for what is pure and bright in your own youth; for what is true and tried in the age of others: for all that is gracious among the living, great among the dead, — and marvellous in the Powers that cannot die. — *Lectures on Art.*

PRELUDE.

WE have seen the same great Faith pervading all the phases of the work of Ruskin. In Nature, he beholds the vision of a Spirit that creates and controls all beauty: in Art, he pleads for the self-expression of the soul as the source of all nobleness and truth: in Sociology, he reiterates with earnestness unflinching the necessity of the moral law. Thus life is to him one harmonious unity: the worship of man inspired by the Spirit of God. He has never shrunk from proclaiming unpopular truths: and the truths to which his nature most deeply responds are unpopular in our generation. In an age that prides itself upon independence, he has proclaimed the necessity of faithful obedience; at a time when the thoughts of men were wonderingly arrested by the vast sweep of mechanical law, he has proclaimed the vaster sweep of life. Always, in his direct moral teachings, we find him fearlessly practical. He deals little with theological speculations: to questions of creeds he opposes the answer of silence. He pleads with stress of spirit for actual work, as the one salvation for body

and for soul; and with stern assurance he throws on our pitiful achievement the relentless light of our professed conviction. Yet, in spite of all the evil that he mourns with the fervor of a Hebrew prophet, he never falters in his belief that human life is meant to be a thing of grace and joy. No taint of asceticism is upon him; no touch of morbid craving for sacrifice. Delight in the works of God is to his thought the true destiny of man.

Not without struggle has Ruskin kept his vision clear. Doubt was not native to him, yet upon him too was it forced in bewildered days. But the struggle had meant victory. Despite his reticence, there can be no doubt concerning his own essential attitude. In his earliest and his latest books alike he shows a high serenity of spiritual sight. We may say of him in the noble words which, belonging first to Browning, belong also to every race-seer, from Homer to Carlyle, — "He at least believed in Soul, he was very sure of God."

THE DAY OF LIFE.

Supposing it were told any of you by a physician whose word you could not but trust, that you had not more than seven days to live. And suppose also that, by the manner of your education it had happened to you, as it has happened to many, never to have heard of any future state, or not to have credited what you heard; and therefore that you had to face this fact of the approach of death in its simplicity; fearing no punishment for any sin that you might have before committed, or in the coming days might determine to commit; and having similarly no hope of reward for past, or yet possible, virtue; nor even of any consciousness whatever to be left to you, after the seventh day had ended, either of the results of your acts, to those whom you loved, or of the feelings of any survivors towards you. Then the manner in which you would spend the seven days is an exact measure of the morality of your nature.

I know that some of you, and I believe the greater number of you, would, in such a case, spend the granted days entirely as you ought. Neither in numbering the errors, or deploring the pleasures of the past; nor in grasping at vile good in the present, nor vainly lamenting the darkness of the future; but in instant and earnest execution of whatever it might be possible for you

to accomplish in the time, in setting your affairs in order, and in providing for the future comfort, and — so far as you might by any message or record of yourself, for the consolation — of those whom you loved, and by whom you desired to be remembered, not for your good, but for theirs. How far you might fail through human weakness, in shame for the past, despair at the little that could in the remnant of life be accomplished, or the intolerable pain of broken affection, would depend wholly on the degree in which your nature has been depressed or fortified by the manner of your past life. But I think there are few of you who would not spend those last days better than all that had preceded them.

If you look accurately through the records of the lives that have been most useful to humanity, you will find that all that has been done best, has been done so; — that to the clearest intellects and highest souls, — to the true children of the Father, with whom a thousand years are as one day, their poor seventy years are but as seven days. The removal of the shadow of death from them to an uncertain, but always narrow, distance, never takes away from them their intuition of its approach; the extending to them of a few hours more or less of light abates not their acknowledgment of the infinitude that must be known to remain beyond their knowledge, — done beyond their deeds: the unprofitableness of their momentary service is wrought in a magnificent despair, and their very honour is bequeathed by them for the joy of others, as they lie down to their

rest, regarding for themselves the voice of men no more.

The best things, I repeat to you, have been done thus, and therefore, sorrowfully. But the greatest part of the good work of the world is done either in pure and unvexed instinct of duty, 'I have stubbed Thornaby waste,' or else, and better, it is cheerful and helpful doing of what the hand finds to do, in surety that at evening time, whatsoever is right the Master will give. And that it be worthily done, depends wholly on that ultimate quantity of worth which you can measure, each in himself, by the test I have just given you. For that test, observe, will mark to you the precise force, first of your absolute courage, and then of the energy in you for the right ordering of things, and the kindly dealing with persons. You have cut away from these two instincts every selfish or common motive, and left nothing but the energies of Order and of Love.

Now, where those two roots are set, all the other powers and desires find right nourishment, and become to their own utmost, helpful to others, and pleasurable to ourselves. And so far as those two springs of action are not in us, all other powers become corrupt or dead; even the love of truth, apart from these, hardens into an insolent and cold avarice of knowledge, which, unused, is more vain than unused gold.

These, then, are the two essential instincts of humanity: the love of Order and the love of Kindness. By the love of order the moral energy is to deal with the earth and to dress it, and keep it; and with all rebel-

lious and dissolute forces in lower creatures, or in ourselves. By the love of doing kindness, it is to deal rightly with all surrounding life. And then, grafted on these, we are to make every other passion perfect; so that they may every one have full strength and yet be absolutely under control.

Every one must be strong, every one perfect, every one obedient as a war horse. And it is among the most beautiful pieces of mysticism to which eternal truth is attached, that the chariot race, which Plato uses as an image of moral government, and which is indeed the most perfect type of it in any visible skill of men, should have been made by the Greeks the continual subject of their best poetry and best art. Nevertheless, Plato's use of it is not altogether true. There is no black horse in the chariot of the soul. One of the driver's worst faults is in starving his horses; another, in not breaking them early enough; but they are all good. Take, for example, one usually thought of as wholly evil — that of Anger, leading to vengeance. I believe it to be quite one of the crowning wickednesses of this age that we have starved and chilled our faculty of indignation, and neither desire nor dare to punish crimes justly.

All true justice is vindictive to vice as it is rewarding to virtue. Only — and herein it is distinguished from personal revenge — it is vindictive of the wrong done, not of the wrong done *to us*. It is the national expression of deliberate anger, as of deliberate gratitude; it is not exemplary, or even corrective, but essentially retrib-

utive; it is the absolute art of measured recompense, giving honour where honour is due, and shame where shame is due, and joy where joy is due, and pain where pain is due. . . . But in this, as in all other instances, the rightness of the secondary passion depends on its being grafted on those two primary instincts, the love of order and of kindness, so that indignation itself is against the wounding of love. Do you think the μῆνις Ἀχιλῆος came of a hard heart in Achilles, or the '*Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas,*' of a hard heart in Anchises' son?

And now, if with this clew through the labyrinth of them, you remember the course of the arts of great nations, you will perceive that whatever has prospered, and become lovely, had its beginning — for no other was possible — in the love of order in material things, associated with true δἰκαιοσύνη, and the desire of beauty in material things, which is associated with true affection, *charitas;* and with the innumerable conditions of true gentleness expressed by the different uses of the words χάρις and *gratia.* You will find that this love of beauty is an essential part of all healthy human nature, and though it can long co-exist with states of life in many other respects unvirtuous, it is itself wholly good; — the direct adversary of envy, avarice, mean worldly care, and especially of cruelty. It entirely perishes when these are wilfully indulged; and the men in whom it has been most strong have always been compassionate, and lovers of justice, and the earliest discerners and declarers of things conducive to the happiness of mankind. . . .

You will find further, that as of love, so of all the other passions, the right government and exaltation begins in that of the Imagination, which is lord over them. For to *subdue* the passions, which is thought so often to be the sum of duty respecting them, is possible enough to a proud dulness; but to *excite* them rightly, and make them strong for good, is the work of the unselfish imagination. It is constantly said that human nature is heartless. Do not believe it. Human nature is kind and generous; but it is narrow and blind; and can only with difficulty conceive anything but what it immediately sees and feels. People would instantly care for others as well as themselves if only they could *imagine* others as well as themselves. Let a child fall into the river before the roughest man's eyes; — he will usually do what he can to get it out, even at some risk to himself: and all the town will triumph in the saving of one little life. Let the same man be shown that hundreds of children are dying of fever for want of some sanitary measure which it will cost him trouble to urge, and he will make no effort; and probably all the town would resist him if he did. So, also, the lives of many deserving women are passed in a succession of petty anxieties about themselves, and gleaning of minute interests and mean pleasures in their immediate circle, because they are never taught to make any effort to look beyond it; or to know anything about the mighty world in which their lives are fading, like blades of bitter grass in fruitless fields. . . .

I press to the conclusion which I wish to leave with

you, that all you can rightly do, or honourably become, depends on the government of these two instincts of order and kindness, by this great Imaginative faculty, which gives you inheritance of the past, grasp of the present, authority over the future. Map out the spaces of your possible lives by its help; measure the range of their possible agency! On the walls and towers of this your fair city, there is not an ornament of which the first origin may not be traced back to the thoughts of men who died two thousand years ago. Whom will *you* be governing by your thoughts, two thousand years hence? Think of it, and you will find that so far from art being immoral, little except art is moral; that life without industry is guilt, and industry without art is brutality; and for the words 'good' and 'wicked' used of men, you may almost substitute the words 'Makers' or 'Destroyers.' Far the greater part of the seeming prosperity of the world is, so far as our present knowledge extends, vain: wholly useless for any kind of good, but having assigned to it a certain inevitable sequence of destruction and of sorrow. Its stress is only the stress of wandering storm; its beauty, the hectic of plague: and what is called the history of mankind is too often the record of the whirlwind, and the map of the spreading of the leprosy. But underneath all that, or in narrow spaces of dominion in the midst of it, the work of every man '*qui non accepit in vanitatem animam suam*,' endures and prospers; a small remnant or green bud of it prevailing at last over evil. And though faint with sickness, and encumbered in ruin,

the true workers redeem inch by inch the wilderness into garden ground; by the help of their joined hands the order of all things is surely sustained and vitally expanded, and although with strange vacillation, in the eyes of the watcher, the morning cometh, and also the night, there is no hour of human existence that does not draw on towards the perfect day.

And perfect the day shall be, when it is of all men understood that the beauty of Holiness must be in labour as well as in rest. Nay! *more*, if it may be, in labour; in our strength, rather than in our weakness; and in the choice of what we shall work for through the six days, and may know to be good at their evening time, than in the choice of what we pray for on the seventh, of reward or repose. With the multitude that keep holiday, we may perhaps sometimes vainly have gone up to the house of the Lord, and vainly there asked for what we fancied would be mercy; but for the few who labour as their Lord would have them, the mercy needs no seeking, and their wide home no hallowing. Surely, goodness and mercy shall *follow* them *all* the days of their life; and they shall dwell in the house of the Lord — FOREVER. — *Lectures on Art*, secs. 83–96.

KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRIT.

YET, observe, I do not mean to speak of the body and soul as separable. The man is made up of both: they are to be raised and glorified together, and all art is an expression of one, by and through the other. All that I would insist upon, is, the necessity of the whole man being in his work; the body *must* be in it. Hands and habits must be in it, whether we will or not; but the nobler part of the man may often not be in it. And that nobler part acts principally in love, reverence, and admiration, together with those conditions of thought which arise out of them. For we usually fall into much error by considering the intellectual powers as having dignity in themselves, and separable from the heart; whereas the truth is, that the intellect becomes noble and ignoble according to the food we give it, and the kind of subjects with which it is conversant. It is not the reasoning power which, of itself, is noble, but the reasoning power occupied with its proper objects. Half of the mistakes of metaphysicians have arisen from their not observing this; namely, that the intellect, going through the same process, is yet mean or noble according to the matter it deals with, and wastes itself away in mere rotary motion, if it be set to grind straws and dust. If we reason only respecting words, or lines, or any trifling and finite things, the reason becomes a con-

temptible faculty; but reason employed on holy and infinite things, becomes herself holy and infinite. . . . For it must be felt at once that the increase of knowledge, merely as such, does not make the soul larger or smaller; that, in the sight of God, all the knowledge man can gain is as nothing, but that the soul, . . . be it ignorant or be it wise, is all in all, and in the activity, strength, health, and well-being of this soul, lies the main difference, in His sight, between one man and another. And that which is all in all in God's estimate is also, be assured, all in all in man's labour, and to have the heart open, and the eyes clear, and the emotions and thoughts warm and quick, and not the knowing of this or the other fact, is the state needed for all mighty doing in this world. And therefore, finally, for this the weightiest of all reasons, let us take no pride in our knowledge. We may, in a certain sense, be proud of being immortal; we may be proud of being God's children; we may be proud of loving, thinking, seeing, and of all that we are by no human teaching: but not of what we have been taught by rote; not of the ballast and freight of the ship of the spirit, but only of its pilotage, without which all the freight will only sink it faster, and strew the sea more richly with its ruin. There is not at this moment a youth of twenty, having received what we moderns ridiculously call education, but he knows more of everything, except the soul, than Plato or St. Paul did; but he is not for that reason a greater man, or fitter for his work, or more fit to be heard by others, than Plato or St. Paul. — *Stones of Venice,* vol. iii. chap. iv.

LIBERTY AND OBEDIENCE.

It is true that there are liberties and liberties. Yonder torrent, crystal-clear, and arrow-swift, with its spray leaping into the air like white troops of fawns, is free enough. Lost, presently, amidst bankless, boundless marsh — soaking in slow shallowness, as it will, hither and thither, listless, among the poisonous reeds and unresisting slime — it is free also. We may choose which liberty we like, — the restraint of voiceful rock, or the dumb and edgeless shore of darkened sand. Of that evil liberty, which men are now glorifying, and proclaiming as essence of gospel to all the earth, and will presently, I suppose, proclaim also to the stars, with invitation to them *out* of their courses, — and of its opposite continence, which is the clasp and χρυσέη περόνη of Aglaia's cestus, we must try to find out something true. For no quality of Art has been more powerful in its influence on public mind; none is more frequently the subject of popular praise, or the end of vulgar effort, than what we call 'Freedom.' It is necessary to determine the justice or injustice of this popular praise.

I said, a little while ago, that the practical teaching of the masters of Art was summed by the O of Giotto. 'You may judge my masterhood of craft,' Giotto tells us, 'by seeing that I can draw a circle unerringly.' And we may safely believe him, understanding him to

mean, that — though more may be necessary to an artist than such a power — at least *this* power is necessary. The qualities of hand and eye needful to do this are the first conditions of artistic craft.

Try to draw a circle yourself with the "free" hand, and with a single line. You cannot do it if your hand trembles, nor if it hesitates, nor if it is unmanageable, nor if it is in the common sense of the word "free." So far from being free, it must be under a control as absolute and accurate as if it were fastened to an inflexible bar of steel. And yet it must move, under this necessary control, with perfect, untormented serenity of ease.

That is the condition of all good work whatsoever. All freedom is error. Every line you lay down is either right or wrong: it may be timidly and awkwardly wrong, or fearlessly and impudently wrong: the aspect of the impudent wrongness is pleasurable to vulgar persons; and what is commonly called 'free' execution: the timid, tottering, hesitating wrongness is rarely so attractive; yet sometimes, if accompanied with good qualities, and right aims in other directions, it becomes in a manner charming, like the inarticulateness of a child: but, whatever the charm or manner of the error, there is but one question ultimately to be asked respecting every line you draw, Is it right or wrong? If right, it most assuredly is not a 'free' line, but an intensely continent, restrained, and considered line; and the action of the hand in laying it is just as decisive, and just as 'free,' as the hand of a first-rate surgeon in a critical incision.

A great operator told me that his hand could check itself within about the two-hundredth of an inch, in penetrating a membrane; and this, of course, without the help of sight, by sensation only. With help of sight, and in action on a substance which does not quiver nor yield, a fine artist's line is measurable in its proposed direction to considerably less than the thousandth of an inch.

A wide freedom, truly! . . .

I believe we can nowhere find a better type of a perfectly free creature than in the common house fly. Nor free only, but brave; and irreverent to a degree which I think no human republican could by any philosophy exalt himself to. There is no courtesy in him; he does not care whether it is king or clown whom he teases; and in every step of his swift mechanical march, and in every pause of his resolute observation, there is one and the same expression of perfect egotism, perfect independence and self-confidence, and conviction of the world's having been made for flies. Strike at him with your hand; and to him, the mechanical fact and external aspect of the matter is, what to you it would be, if an acre of red clay, ten feet thick, tore itself up from the ground in one massive field, hovered over you in the air for a second, and came crashing down with an aim. That is the external aspect of it; the inner aspect, to his fly's mind, is of quite natural and unimportant occurrence — one of the momentary conditions of his active life. He steps out of the way of your hand, and alights on the back of it. You cannot terrify him, nor govern him, nor persuade him, nor convince him. He has his own posi-

tive opinion on all matters; not an unwise one, usually, for his own ends; and will ask no advice of yours. He has no work to do — no tyrannical instinct to obey. The earthworm has his digging; the bee, her gathering and building; the spider, her cunning net-work; the ant, her treasury and accounts. All these are comparative slaves, or people of vulgar business. But your fly, free in the air, free in the chamber — a black incarnation of caprice — wandering, investigating, flitting, flirting, feasting at his will, with rich variety of choice in feast, from the heaped sweets in the grocer's window to those of the butcher's back-yard, and from the galled place on your cab-horse's back to the brown spot in the road, from which as the hoof disturbs him, he rises with angry republican buzz — what freedom is like his?

For captivity again, perhaps your poor watch-dog is as sorrowful a type as you will easily find. Mine certainly is. The day is lovely, but I must write this, and cannot go out with him. He is chained in the yard, because I do not like dogs in rooms, and the gardener does not like dogs in gardens. He has no books, — nothing but his own weary thoughts for company, and a group of those free flies, whom he snaps at, with sullen ill success. Such dim hope as he may have that I may yet take him out with me, will be, hour by hour, wearily disappointed; or, worse, darkened at once into a leaden despair by an authoritative 'No' — too well understood. His fidelity only seals his fate; if he would not watch for me, he would be sent away, and go hunting with some happier master: but he watches, and is wise, and faithful, and

miserable: and his high animal intellect only gives him the wistful powers of wonder, and sorrow, and desire, and affection, which embitter his captivity! Yet of the two, would we rather be watch-dog, or fly?

Indeed, the first point we have all to determine is not how free we are, but what kind of creatures we are. It is of small importance to any of us whether we get liberty; but of the greatest that we deserve it. Whether we can win it, fate must determine; but that we may be worthy of it, we may ourselves determine; and the sorrowfullest fate, of all that we can suffer, is to have it, *without* deserving it.

I have hardly patience to hold my pen and go on writing, as I remember (I would that it were possible for a few consecutive instants to forget) the infinite follies of modern thought in this matter, centred in the notion that liberty is good for a man, irrespectively of the use he is likely to make of it. Folly unfathomable! unspeakable! unendurable to look in the full face of, as the laugh of a cretin. You will send your child, will you, into a room where the table is loaded with sweet wine and fruit — some poisoned, some not? — you will say to him, "Choose freely, my little child! It is so good for you to have freedom of choice: it forms your character — your individuality! If you take the wrong cup, or the wrong berry, you will die before the day is over, but you will have acquired the dignity of a Free child"?

You think that puts the case too sharply? I tell you, lover of liberty, there is no choice offered to you, but it is similarly between life and death. There is no act, nor

option of act, possible, but the wrong deed or option has poison in it which will stay in your veins thereafter forever. Never more to all eternity can you be as you might have been, had you not done that — chosen that. You have 'formed your character,' forsooth! No; if you have chosen ill, you have De-formed it, and that forever! In some choices, it had been better for you that a red-hot iron bar had struck you aside, scarred and helpless, than that you had so chosen. 'You will know better next time!' No. Next time will never come. Next time the choice will be in quite another aspect — between quite different things, — you, weaker than you were by the evil into which you have fallen; it, more doubtful than it was, by the increased dimness of your sight. No one ever gets wiser by doing wrong, nor stronger. You will get wiser and stronger only by doing right, whether forced or not; the prime, the one need is to do *that,* under whatever compulsion, until you can do it without compulsion. And then you are a Man.

'What!' a wayward youth might perhaps answer, incredulously; 'no one ever gets wiser by doing wrong? Shall I not know the world best by trying the wrong of it, and repenting? Have I not, even as it is, learned much by many of my errors?' Indeed, the effort by which partially you recovered yourself was precious; that part of your thought by which you discerned the error was precious. What wisdom and strength you kept, and rightly used, are rewarded; and in the pain and the repentance, and in the acquaintance with the aspects of folly and sin, you have learned *something;* how much less

than you would have learned in right paths, can never be told, but that it *is* less is certain. Your liberty of choice has simply destroyed for you so much life and strength, never regainable. It is true you now know the habits of swine, and the taste of husks: do you think your father could not have taught you to know better habits and pleasanter tastes, if you had stayed in his house; and that the knowledge you have lost would not have been more, as well as sweeter, than that you have gained? But 'it so forms my individuality to be free!' Your individuality was given you by God, and in your race; and if you have any to speak of, you will want no liberty. You will want a den to work in, and peace, and light — no more, — in absolute need; if more in any wise, it will still not be liberty, but direction, instruction, reproof, and sympathy. But if you have no individuality, if there is no true character nor true desire in you, then you will indeed want to be free. You will begin early; and, as a boy, desire to be a man; and, as a man, think yourself as good as every other. You will choose freely to eat, freely to drink, freely to stagger and fall, freely, at last, to curse yourself and die. Death is the only real freedom possible to us: and that is consummate freedom, — permission for every particle in the rotting body to leave its neighbour particle, and shift for itself. You call it "corruption" in the flesh; but before it comes to that, all liberty is an equal corruption in mind. You ask for freedom of thought; but if you have not sufficient grounds for thought, you have no business to think; and if you have sufficient grounds, you have

no business to think wrong. Only one thought is possible to you, if you are wise — your liberty is geometrically proportionate to your folly.

'But all this glory and activity of our age; what are they owing to, but to our freedom of thought?' In a measure, they are owing — what good is in them — to the discovery of many lies, and the escape from the power of evil. Not to liberty, but to the deliverance from evil or cruel masters. Brave men have dared to examine lies which had long been taught, not because they were *free*-thinkers, but because they were such stern and close thinkers that the lie could no longer escape them. Of course the restriction of thought, or of its expression, by persecution, is merely a form of violence, justifiable or not, as other violence is, according to the character of the persons against whom it is exercised, and the divine and eternal laws which it vindicates or violates. We must not burn a man alive for saying that the Athanasian creed is ungrammatical, nor stop a bishop's salary because we are getting the worst of an argument with him; neither must we let drunken men howl in the public streets at night. There is much that is true in the part of Mr. Mill's essay on Liberty which treats of freedom of thought; some important truths are there beautifully expressed, but many, quite vital, are omitted; and the balance, therefore, is wrongly struck. The liberty of expression, with a great nation, would become like that in a well-educated company, in which there is indeed freedom of speech, but not of clamour; or like that in an orderly senate, in which men who deserve

to be heard, are heard in due time, and under determined restrictions. The degree of liberty you can rightly grant to a number of men is in the inverse ratio of their desire for it; and a general hush, or call to order, would be often very desirable in this England of ours. For the rest, of any good or evil extant, it is impossible to say what measure is owing to restraint, and what to licence, where the right is balanced between them. . . .

In fine, the arguments for liberty may in general be summed in a few very simple forms as follows: —

Misguiding is mischievous: therefore, guiding is.

If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch: therefore, nobody should lead anybody.

Lambs and fawns should be left free in the fields; much more bears and wolves.

If a man's gun and shot are his own, he may fire in any direction he pleases.

A fence across a road is inconvenient; much more, one at the side of it.

Babes should not be swaddled with their hands bound down at their sides: therefore, they should be thrown out to roll in the kennels naked.

None of these arguments are good, and the practical issues of them are worse. For there are certain eternal laws for human conduct which are quite clearly discernible by human reason. So far as these are discovered and obeyed, by whatever machinery or authority the obedience is procured, there follow life and strength. So far as they are disobeyed, by whatever good intention the disobedience is brought about, there follow ruin and

sorrow. And the first duty of every man in the world is to find his true master, and, for his own good, submit to him; and to find his true inferior, and, for that inferior's good, conquer him. The punishment is sure, if we either refuse the reverence, or are too cowardly and indolent to enforce the compulsion. A base nation crucifies or poisons its wise men, and lets its fools rave and rot in its streets. A wise nation obeys the one, restrains the other, and cherishes all. — *The Queen of the Air*, secs. 143–156.

Wise laws and just restraints are to a noble nation not chains, but chain mail — strength and defence, though something, also, of an incumbrance. And this necessity of restraint, remember, is just as honourable to man as the necessity of labour. You hear every day greater numbers of foolish people speaking about liberty, as if it were such an honourable thing; so far from being that, it is, on the whole, and in the broadest sense, dishonourable, and an attribute of the lower creatures. No human being, however great or powerful, was ever so free as a fish. There is always something that he must, or must not do; while the fish may do whatever he likes. All the kingdoms of the world put together are not half so large as the sea, and all the railroads and wheels that ever were, or will be, invented are not so easy as fins. You will find, on fairly thinking of it, that it is his Restraint which is honourable to man, not his Liberty; and, what is more, it is restraint which is honourable even in the lower animals. A butterfly is

much more free than a bee; but you honour the bee more, just because it is subject to certain laws which fit it for orderly function in bee society. And throughout the world, of the two abstract things, liberty and restraint, restraint is always the more honourable. It is true, indeed, that in these and all other matters you never can reason finally from the abstraction, for both liberty and restraint are good when they are nobly chosen, and both are bad when they are basely chosen; but of the two, I repeat, it is restraint which characterizes the higher creature, and betters the lower creature: and, from the ministering of the archangel to the labour of the insect, — from the poising of the planets to the gravitation of a grain of dust, — the power and glory of all creatures, and all matter, consist in their obedience, not in their freedom. The Sun has no liberty — a dead leaf has much. The dust of which you are formed has no liberty. Its liberty will come — with its corruption. — *The Two Paths*, sec. 192.

APHORISMS.

In these days you have to guard against the fatallest darkness of the two opposite Prides — the Pride of Faith, which imagines that the Nature of the Deity can be defined by its convictions; and the Pride of Science, which imagines that the Energy of Deity can be explained by its analysis. — *Lectures on Art*, sec. 38.

We are all of us willing enough to accept dead truths or blunt ones, which can be fitted harmoniously into spare niches, or shrouded and coffined at once out of the way, we holding complacently the cemetery keys, and supposing we have learned something. But a sapling truth, with earth at its root and blossom on its branches, or a trenchant truth that can cut its way through bars and sods, most men, it seems to me, dislike the sight or entertainment of, if by any means such guest or vision may be avoided. And, indeed, this is no wonder; for one such truth, thoroughly accepted, connects itself strangely with others, and there is no saying what it may lead us to. — *The Two Paths*, preface.

Almost the whole system and hope of modern life are founded on the notion that you may substitute mechanism for skill, photograph for picture, cast-iron for

sculpture. This is your main nineteenth century faith, or infidelity. You think you can get everything by grinding, — music, literature, and painting. You will find it grievously not so; you can get nothing but dust by mere grinding. Even to have the barley-meal out of it, you must have the barley first; and that comes by growth, not grinding. — *Lectures on Art,* sec. 100.

I wish to plead for your several and future consideration of this one truth, that the notion of Discipline and Interference lies at the very root of all human progress or power; that the 'Let Alone' principle is, in all things which man has to do with, the principle of death; that it is ruin to him, certain and total, if he lets his land alone — if he lets his fellow-men alone — if he lets his own soul alone. — *A Joy Forever,* lect. i.

Human work must be done honourably and thoroughly because we are now Men: whether we ever expect to be angels, or ever were slugs, being practically no matter. — *Fors Clavigera,* letter lxxvi.

I think that every rightly constituted mind ought to rejoice, not so much in knowing anything clearly, as in feeling that there is infinitely more which it cannot know. None but proud or weak men would mourn over this, for we may always know more if we choose, by working on; but the pleasure is, I think, to humble people, in knowing that the journey is endless, the treasure inexhaustible, — watching the cloud still march

before them with its summitless pillar, and being sure, that, to the end of time and to the length of eternity, the mysteries of its infinity will open still farther and farther, their dimness being the sign and necessary adjunct of their inexhaustibleness. — *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. part v. ch. v.

The healthy sense of progress, which is necessary to the strength and happiness of men, does not consist in the anxiety of a struggle to attain higher place or rank, but in gradually perfecting the manner, and accomplishing the ends, of the life which we have chosen, or which circumstances have determined for us.

The first condition under which education can be given usefully is, that it should be clearly understood to be no means of getting on in the world, but a means of staying pleasantly in your place there. — *Time and Tide*, letters iv., xvi.

I don't know any more tiresome flower in the borders than your especially 'modest' snowdrop; which one always has to stoop down and take all sorts of tiresome trouble with, and nearly break its poor little head off, before you can see it; and then, half of it is not worth seeing. Girls should be like daisies; nice and white, with an edge of red, if you look close; making the ground bright wherever they are; knowing simply and quietly that they do it, and are meant to do it, and that it would be very wrong if they didn't do it. — *Ethics of the Dust*, vii.

One thing I solemnly desire to see all children taught — obedience; and one to all persons entering into life — the power of unselfish admiration. — *The Eagle's Nest,* sec. 239.

The moment a man can really do his work, he becomes speechless about it. All words become idle to him — all theories. — *Mystery of Life,* sec. 120.

Folded hands are not necessarily resigned ones. The Patience who really smiles at grief usually stands, or walks, or even runs: she seldom sits. — *Ethics of the Dust,* iv.

There are three things to which man is born — labour, and sorrow, and joy. Each of these three things has its baseness and its nobleness. There is base labour, and noble labour. There is base sorrow, and noble sorrow. There is base joy, and noble joy. But you must not think to avoid the corruption of these things by doing without the things themselves. Nor can any life be right that has not all three. Labour without joy is base. Sorrow without labour is base. Joy without labour is base. — *Time and Tide,* letter v.

The will of God respecting us is that we shall live by each other's happiness, and life; not by each other's misery, or death. A child may have to die for its parents; but the purpose of Heaven is that it shall rather live for them; — that, not by its sacrifice, but by its

strength, its joy, its force of being, it shall be to them renewal of strength; and as the arrow in the hand of the giant. So it is in all other right relations. Men help each other by their joy, not by their sorrow. They are not intended to slay themselves for each other, but to strengthen themselves for each other. — *Ethics of the Dust*, vi.

LETTER TO YOUNG GIRLS.

My dear Children, — The rules of St. George's Company are none other than those which, at your baptism, your godfather and godmother promised to see that you should obey — namely, the rules of conduct given to all His disciples by Christ, so far as, according to your ages, you can understand or practise them. . . .

St. George's first order to you, supposing you were put under his charge, would be that you should always, in whatever you do, endeavor to please Christ; (and *He* is quite easily pleased if you try;) but in attempting this you will instantly find yourself likely to displease many of your friends or relations; and St. George's second order to you is, that in whatever you do, you consider what is kind and dutiful to them also, and that you hold it for a sure rule that no manner of disobedience to your parents, or of disrespect and presumption towards your friends, can be pleasing to God. You must therefore be doubly submissive; first in your own will and purpose to the law of Christ; then in the carrying out of your purpose, to the pleasure and orders of the persons whom He has given you for superiors. And you are not to submit to them sullenly, but joyfully and heartily, keeping nevertheless your own purpose clear, so soon as it becomes proper for you to carry it out.

Under these conditions, here are a few of St. George's orders for you to begin with:—

1st. Keep absolute calm of temper, under all chances; receiving everything that is provoking and disagreeable to you as coming directly from Christ's hand: and the more it is like to provoke you, thank Him for it the more: as a young soldier would his general for trusting him with a hard place to hold on the rampart. And remember, it does not in the least matter what happens to you, — whether a clumsy schoolfellow tears your dress, or a shrewd one laughs at you, or the governess doesn't understand you. The *one* thing needful is that none of these things should vex you. For your mind is at this time of your youth crystallizing like sugar-candy; and the least jar to it flaws the crystal, and that permanently.

2d. Say to yourself every morning, just after your prayers: "Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple." That is exactly and completely true: meaning that you are to give all you have to Christ to take care of for you. Then if He doesn't take care of it, of course you know it wasn't worth anything. And if He takes anything from you, you know you are better without it. You will not indeed, at your age, have to give up houses, or lands, or boats, or nets; but you may perhaps break your favorite tea-cup, or lose your favorite thimble, and might be vexed about it, but for this second St. George's precept.

3d. What, after this surrender, you find intrusted to you, take extreme care of, and make as useful as possible. The greater part of all they have is usually given to

grown-up people by Christ, merely that they may give it away again: but school-girls, for the most part, are likely to have little more than what is needed for themselves: of which, whether books, dresses, or pretty room furniture, you are to take extreme care, looking on yourself, indeed, practically, as a little housemaid set to keep Christ's books and room in order, and not as yourself the mistress of anything.

4th. Dress as plainly as your parents will allow you: but in bright colours, (if they become you,) and in the best materials,—that is to say, in those which will wear longest. When you are really in want of a new dress, buy it (or make it) in the fashion; but never quit an old one merely because it has become unfashionable. And if the fashion be costly, you must not follow it. You may wear broad stripes or narrow, bright colours or dark, short petticoats or long, (in moderation,) as the public wish you; but you must not buy yards of useless stuff to make a knot or a flounce of, nor drag them behind you over the ground. And your walking dress must never touch the ground at all. I have lost much of the faith I once had in the common sense and even in the personal delicacy of the present race of average Englishwomen, by seeing how they will allow their dresses to sweep the streets, if it is the fashion to be scavengers.

5th. If you can afford it, get your dresses made by a good dressmaker, with utmost attainable precision and perfection: but let this good dressmaker be a poor person, living in the country; not a rich person living in a large house in London. . . .

6th. Learn dressmaking yourself, with pains and time; and use a part of every day in needlework, making as pretty dresses as you can for poor people who have not time nor taste to make them nicely for themselves. You are to show them in your own wearing what is most right and graceful; and to help them to choose what will be prettiest and most becoming in their own station. If they see that you never try to dress above yours they will not try to dress above theirs. . . .

7th. Never seek for amusement, but be always ready to be amused. The least thing has play in it — the slightest word, wit, when your hands are busy and your heart is free. But if you make the aim of your life amusement, the day will come when all the agonies of a pantomime will not bring to you an honest laugh. Play actively and gayly; and cherish, without straining, the natural powers of jest in others and yourselves; remembering all the while that your hand is every instant on the helm of the ship of your life, and that the Master, on the far shore of Araby the Blest, looks for its sail on the horizon, — to its hour. — Now that it is 'considered improper' by the world that you should do anything for Christ, is entirely true, and always true; and therefore it was that your godfathers and godmothers, in your name, renounced the "vain pomp and glory of the world," with all covetous desires of the same — see baptismal service — but I much doubt if you, either privately or from the pulpit of your doubtless charming church, have ever been taught what the "vain pomp and glory of the world" was.

Well, do you want to be better dressed than your schoolfellows? Some of them are probably poor, and cannot afford to dress like you; or, on the other hand, you may be poor yourselves, and may be mortified at their being dressed better than you. Put an end to all that at once, by resolving to go down into the deep of your girl's heart, where you will find, inlaid by Christ's own hand, a better thing than vanity — pity. And be sure of this, that, although in a truly Christian land, every young girl would be dressed beautifully and delightfully, — in this entirely heathen and Bael-worshipping land of ours, not one girl in ten has either decent or healthy clothing, and that you have no business now to wear anything fine yourself, but are bound to use your full strength and resources to dress as many of your poor neighbours as you can. What of fine dress your people insist upon your wearing, take — and wear proudly and prettily, for their sakes; but, so far as it in you lies, be sure that every day you are labouring to clothe some poorer creatures. And if you cannot clothe, at least help, with your hands. You can make your own bed; wash your own plate; brighten your own furniture, — if nothing else.

'But that's servant's work!' Of course it is. What business have you to hope to be better than a servant of servants? 'God made you a lady'? Yes, He has put you, that is to say, in a position in which you may learn to speak your own language beautifully; to be accurately acquainted with the elements of other languages; to behave with grace, tact, and sympathy to all around

you; to know the history of your country, the commands of its religion, and the duties of its use. If you obey His will in learning these things, you will obtain the power of becoming a true 'lady,' and you will become one, if while you learn these things you set yourself, with all the strength of your youth and womanhood, to serve His servants, until the day come when He calls you to say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

You may thus become a Christ's lady, or you may, if you will, become a Belial's lady, taking Belial's gift of miserable idleness, living on the labour and shame of others, and deceiving them and yourself by lies about Providence, until you perish with the rest of such, shrieking the bitter cry, 'When saw we *Thee?*'

You may become a Christ's lady if you *will*, I say; but you *must* will vigorously — there is no possible compromise. Most people think, if they keep all the best rooms in the house swept and garnished for Christ, with plenty of flowers and good books in them, that they may keep a little chamber in their heart's wall for Belial, on his occasional visits, or a three-legged stool for him in the heart's counting-house, or a corner for him in the heart's scullery, where he may lick the dishes. It won't do, my dears! You must cleanse the house of him, as you would of the plague, to the last spot. You must be resolved that as all you have shall be God's, so all you *are* shall be God's; and you are to make it so, simply and quietly, by thinking always of yourself merely as sent to do His work; and considering

at every leisure time what you are to do next. Don't fret nor tease yourself about it, far less other people. Don't wear white crosses, nor black dresses, nor caps with lappets. Nobody has any right to go about in an offensively celestial uniform, as if it were more *their* business, or privilege, than it is everybody's, to be God's servants. But, know and feel assuredly that every day of your lives you have done all you can for the good of others. Done, I repeat — not said. Help your companions, but don't talk religious sentiment to them; and serve the poor, but, for your lives, you little monkeys, don't preach to them. They are probably, without in the least knowing it, fifty times better Christians than you; and if anybody is to preach, let *them*. Make friends of them when they are nice, as you do of nice rich people; feel with them, work with them, and if you are not at last sure it is a pleasure to you both to see each other, keep out of their way. For material charity, let older and wiser people see to it; and be content, like Athenian maids in the procession of their home-goddess, with the honour of carrying the basket.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

— *Fors Clavigera*, letters lxv., lxvi.

TRANCE.

This intense apathy in all of us is the first great mystery of life; it stands in the way of every perception, every virtue. There is no making ourselves feel enough astonishment at it. That the occupations or pastimes of life should have no motive, is understandable; but — That life itself should have no motive — that we neither care to find out what it may lead to, nor to guard against its being forever taken away from us — here is a mystery indeed. For, just suppose I were able to call at this moment to any one in this audience by name, and to tell him positively that I knew a large estate had been lately left to him on some curious conditions; but that, though I knew it was large, I did not know how large, nor even where it was — whether in the East Indies or the West, or in England, or at the Antipodes. I only knew it was a vast estate, and that there was a chance of his losing it altogether if he did not soon find out on what terms it had been left to him. Suppose I were able to say this positively to any single man in this audience, and he knew that I did not speak without warrant, do you think that he would rest content with that vague knowledge, if it were anywise possible to obtain more? Would he not give every energy to find some trace of the facts, and never rest till he had ascertained where this place was, and what it was like? And suppose he

were a young man, and all he could discover by his best endeavor was, that the estate was never to be his at all unless he persevered during certain years of probation, in an orderly and industrious life; but that, according to the rightness of his conduct, the portion of the estate assigned to him would be greater or less, so that it literally depended on his behaviour from day to day whether he got ten thousand a year, or thirty thousand a year, or nothing whatever — would you not think it strange if the youth never troubled himself to satisfy the conditions in any way, nor even to know what was required of him, but lived exactly as he chose, and never inquired whether his chances of the estate were increasing or passing away? Well, you know that this is actually and literally so with the greater number of the educated persons now living in Christian countries. Nearly every man and woman, in any company such as this, outwardly professes to believe — and a large number unquestionably think they believe — much more than this; not only that a quite limited estate is in prospect for them if they please the Holder of it, but that the infinite contrary of such a possession — an estate of perpetual misery, is in store for them if they displease this great Land-Holder, this great Heaven-Holder. And yet there is not one in a thousand of these human souls that cares to think, for ten minutes of the day, where this estate is, or how beautiful it is, or what kind of life they are to lead in it, or what kind of life they must lead to obtain it. — *The Mystery of Life*, sec. 108.

WORLD'S WORK.

WHENEVER the arts and labours of life are fulfilled in this spirit of striving against misrule, and doing whatever we have to do, honourably and perfectly, they invariably bring happiness, as much as seems possible to the nature of man. In all other paths, by which that happiness is pursued, there is disappointment, or destruction: for ambition and for passion there is no rest — no fruition; the fairest pleasures of youth perish in a darkness greater than their past light; and the loftiest and purest love too often does but inflame the cloud of life with endless fire of pain. But, ascending from lowest to highest, through every scale of human industry, that industry worthily followed, gives peace. Ask the labourer in the field, at the forge, or in the mine; ask the patient, delicate-fingered artisan, or the strong-armed, fiery-hearted worker in bronze, and in marble, and with the colours of light; and none of these, who are true workmen, will ever tell you, that they have found the law of heaven an unkind one — that in the sweat of their face they should eat bread, till they return to the ground; nor that they ever found it an unrewarded obedience, if, indeed, it was rendered faithfully to the command — "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

There are the two great and constant lessons which our labourers teach us of the mystery of life. But there is another, and a sadder one, which they cannot teach us, which they must read on their tombstones.

"Do it with thy might." There have been myriads upon myriads of human creatures who have obeyed this law, — who have put every breath and nerve of their being into its toil, — who have devoted every hour, and exhausted every faculty, — who have bequeathed their unaccomplished thoughts at death, — who, being dead, have yet spoken by majesty of memory, and strength of example. And, at last, what has all this "Might" of humanity accomplished, in six thousand years of labour and sorrow? What has it *done?* Take the three chief occupations and arts of men, one by one, and count their achievements. Begin with the first — the lord of them all — agriculture. Six thousand years have passed since we were set to till the ground from which we were taken. How much of it is tilled? How much of that which is, wisely or well? In the very centre and chief garden of Europe — where the two forms of parent Christianity have had their fortresses — where the noble Catholics of the Forest Cantons, and the noble Protestants of the Vaudois valleys, have maintained, for dateless ages, their faiths and liberties, — there the unchecked Alpine rivers yet run wild in devastation: and the marshes, which a few hundred men could redeem with a year's labour, still blast their helpless inhabitants into fevered idiotism. That is so, in the centre of Europe! While, on the near coast of

Africa, once the garden of the Hesperides, an Arab woman, but a few sunsets since, ate her child for famine. And, with all the treasures of the East at our feet, we, in our own dominion, could not find a few grains of rice for a people that asked of us no more; but stood by, and saw five hundred thousand of them perish of hunger.

Then, after agriculture, the art of kings, take the next head of human arts — weaving; the art of queens, honoured of all noble Heathen women, in the person of their virgin goddess — honoured of all Hebrew women, by the word of their wisest king: "She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; she stretcheth out her hand to the poor. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself covering of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it, and delivereth girdles to the merchant." What have we done in all these thousands of years with this bright art of Greek maid and Christian matron? Six thousand years of weaving, and have we learned to weave? Might not every naked wall have been purple with tapestry, and every feeble breast fenced with sweet colors from the cold? What have we done? Our fingers are too few, it seems, to twist together some poor covering for our bodies. We set our streams to work for us, and choke the air with fire, to turn our spinning-wheels — and, — *are we yet clothed?* Are not the streets of the capitals of Europe foul with the sale of cast clouts and rotten rags? Is not the beauty of your

sweet children left in wretchedness of disgrace, while, with better honour, nature clothes the brood of the bird in its nest, and the suckling of the wolf in her den? And does not every winter's snow robe what you have not robed, and shroud what you have not shrouded; and every winter's wind bear up to heaven its wasted souls, to witness against you hereafter, by the voice of their Christ, — "I was naked, and ye clothed me not"?

Lastly, take the Art of Building — the strongest, proudest, most orderly, most enduring of the arts of man, that of which the produce is in the surest manner accumulative, and need not perish, or be replaced; but if once well done, will stand more strongly than the unbalanced rocks — more prevalently than the crumbling hills. The art which is associated with all civic pride and sacred principle; with which men record their power, satisfy their enthusiasm, make sure their defence, define and make dear their habitation. And, in six thousand years of building, what have we done? Of the greater part of all that skill and strength, *no* vestige is left, but fallen stones that encumber the fields and impede the streams. But, from this waste of disorder, and of time and of rage, what *is* left to us? Constructive and progressive creatures, that we are, with ruling brains, and forming hands, capable of fellowship, and thirsting for fame, can we not contend, in comfort, with the insects of the forest, or, in achievement, with the worm of the sea? The white surf rages in vain against the ramparts built by poor atoms of scarcely nascent life; but

only ridges of formless ruin mark the places where once dwelt our noblest multitudes. The ant and the moth have cells for each of their young, but our little ones lie in festering heaps, in homes that consume them like graves; and night by night, from the corners of our streets, rises up the cry of the homeless — "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in." . . .

Is there but one day of judgment? Why, for us every day is a day of judgment, — every day is a Dies Iræ, and writes its irrevocable verdict in the flame of its West. Think you that judgment waits till the doors of the grave are opened? It waits at the doors of your houses, — it waits at the corners of your streets; we are in the midst of judgment, the insects that we crush are our judges, the moments we fret away are our judges, the elements that feed us, judge, as they minister, — and the pleasures that deceive us, judge as they indulge. Let us, for our lives, do the work of Men while we bear the Form of them, if indeed those lives are *Not* as a vapor, and do *Not* vanish away.

"The work of men" — and what is that? Well, we may any of us know very quickly, on the condition of being wholly ready to do it. But many of us are for the most part thinking, not of what we are to do, but of what we are to get; and the best of us are sunk into the sin of Ananias, and it is a mortal one — we want to keep back part of the price; and we continually talk of taking up our cross, as if the only harm in a cross was the *weight* of it — as if it was only a thing to be carried instead of to be — crucified upon. "They that are His

have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." Does that mean, think you, that in time of national distress, of religious trial, of crisis for every interest and hope of humanity — none of us will cease jesting, none cease idling, none put themselves to any wholesome work, none take so much as a tag of lace off their footman's coats, to save the world? Or does it rather mean, that they are ready to leave houses, lands, and kindreds — yes, and life, if need be? Life! — some of us are ready enough to throw that away, joyless as we have made it. But "*station* in Life," how many of us are ready to quit *that?* Is it not always the great objection, where there is question of finding something useful to do, "We cannot leave our stations in life"?

Those of us who really cannot — that is to say, who can only maintain themselves by continuing in some business or salaried office, have already something to do; and all that they have to see to, is that they do it honestly and with all their might. But with most people who use that apology, "remaining in the station of life to which Providence has called them," means keeping all the carriages, and all the footmen and large houses they can possibly pay for; and, once for all, I say that if ever Providence *did* put them into stations of that sort — which is not at all a matter of certainty — Providence is just now very distinctly calling them out again. Levi's station in life was the receipt of custom; and Peter's, the shore of Galilee; and Paul's, the antechambers of the High Priest, — which "station in life" each had to leave, with brief notice.

And, whatever our station in life may be, at this crisis, those of us who mean to fulfil our duty ought, first, to live on as little as we can; and, secondly, to do all the wholesome work for it we can, and to spend all we can spare in doing all the sure good we can.

And sure good is first in feeding people, then in dressing people, then in lodging people, and lastly in rightly pleasing people, with arts, or sciences, or any other subject of thought.

I say first in feeding; and, once for all, do not let yourselves be deceived by any of the common talk of "indiscriminate charity." The order to us is not to feed the deserving hungry, nor the industrious hungry, nor the amiable and well-intentioned hungry; but simply to feed the hungry. It is quite true, infallibly true, that if any man will not work, neither should he eat, — think of that, and every time you sit down to your dinner, ladies and gentlemen, say solemnly, before you ask a blessing, "How much work have I done to-day for my dinner?" But the proper way to enforce that order on those below you, as well as on yourselves, is not to leave vagabonds and honest people to starve together, but very distinctly to discern and seize your vagabond; and shut your vagabond up out of honest people's way, and very sternly then see that, until he has worked, he does *not* eat. But the first thing is to be sure you have the food to give; and, therefore, to enforce the organization of vast activities in agriculture and in commerce, for the production of the wholesomest food, and proper storing and distribution of it, so that no famine shall any more be

possible among civilized beings. There is plenty of work in this business alone, and at once, for any number of people who like to engage in it.

Secondly, dressing people — that is to say, urging every one within reach of your influence to be always neat and clean, and giving them means of being so. In so far as they absolutely refuse, you must give up the effort with respect to them, only taking care that no children within your sphere of influence shall any more be brought up with such habits; and that every person who is willing to dress with propriety shall have encouragement to do so. And the first absolutely necessary step towards this is the gradual adoption of a consistent dress for different ranks of persons, so that their rank shall be known by their dress; and the restriction of the changes of fashion within certain limits. All which appears for the present quite impossible; but it is only so far even difficult, as it is difficult to conquer our vanity, frivolity, and desire to appear what we are not. And it is not, nor ever shall be, creed of mine, that these mean and shallow vices are unconquerable by Christian women.

And then, thirdly, lodging people, which you may think should have been put first, but I put it third, because we must feed and clothe people where we find them, and lodge them afterwards. And providing lodgment for them means a great deal of vigorous legislation, and cutting down of vested interests that stand in the way; and after that, or before that, so far as we can get it, through sanitary and remedial action in the houses

that we have; and then the building of more, strongly, beautifully, and in groups of limited extent, kept in proportion to their streams, and walled round, so that there may be no festering and wretched suburb anywhere, but clean and busy street within, and open country without, with a belt of beautiful garden and orchard round the walls, so that from any part of the city, perfectly fresh air and grass, and sight of far horizon might be reachable in a few minutes' walk. This the final aim; but in immediate action every minor and possible good to be instantly done, when, and as, we can; roofs mended that have holes in them, fences patched that have gaps in them, walls buttressed that totter, and floors propped that shake; cleanliness and order enforced with our own hands and eyes, till we are breathless, every day. And all the fine arts will healthily follow. I myself have washed a flight of stone stairs all down, with bucket and broom, in a Savoy inn, where they hadn't washed their stairs since they first went up them; and I never made a better sketch than that afternoon.

These, then, are the three first needs of civilized life; and the law for every Christian man and woman is, that they shall be in direct service towards one of these three needs, as far as is consistent with their own special occupation, and if they have no special business, then wholly in one of these services. And out of such exertion in plain duty all other good will come; for in this direct contention with material evil, you will find out the real nature of all evil; you will discern by the various kinds of resistance, what is really the fault and main

antagonism to good; also you will find the most unexpected helps and profound lessons given, and truths will come thus down to us, which the speculation of all our lives would never have raised us up to. You will find nearly every educational problem solved, as soon as you truly want to do something; everybody will become of use in their own fittest way, and will learn what is best for them to know in that use. Competitive examination will then, and not till then, be wholesome, because it will be daily, and calm, and in practice; and on these familiar arts, and minute, but certain and serviceable knowledges, will be surely edified and sustained the greater arts and splendid theoretical sciences.

But much more than this. On such holy and simple practice will be founded, indeed, at last, an infallible religion. The greatest of all the mysteries of life, and the most terrible, is the corruption of even the sincerest religion, which is not daily founded on rational, effective, humble, and helpful action. Helpful action, observe! for there is just one law, which obeyed, keeps all religions pure; forgotten, makes them all false. Whenever in any religious faith, dark or bright, we allow our minds to dwell upon the points in which we differ from other people, we are wrong, and in the devil's power. That is the essence of the Pharisee's thanksgiving, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." At every moment of our lives we should be trying to find out, not in what we differ from other people, but in what we agree with them; and the moment we find we can agree as to anything that should be done, kind or good,

(and who but fools couldn't?) then do it; push at it together; you can't quarrel in a side-by-side push; but the moment that even the best men stop pushing, and begin talking, they mistake their pugnacity for piety, and it's all over. — *The Mystery of Life,* secs. 128–140.

WORLD'S WORTH.

EVERY seventh day, if not oftener, the greater number of well-meaning people in England thankfully receive from their teachers a benediction, couched in these terms: "The Grace of our Lord Christ, and the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you." Now I do not know precisely what sense is attached, in the English public mind, to these expressions. But what I have to tell you positively is, that the three things do actually exist, and can be known if you care to know them, and possessed if you care to possess them; and that another thing exists, besides these, of which we already know too much.

First, by simply obeying the orders of the Founder of your religion, all grace, graciousness, or beauty and favour of gentle life, will be given to you in mind and body, in work and in rest. The Grace of Christ exists, and can be had if you will. Secondly, as you know more and more of the created world, you will find that the true will of its Maker is that its creatures should be happy; that He has made everything beautiful in its time and its place, and that it is chiefly by the fault of men, when they are allowed the liberty of thwarting His laws, that Creation groans and travails in pain. The Love of God exists, and you may see it and live in it if you will. Lastly, a Spirit does actually exist

which teaches the ant her path; the bird, her building; and men, in an instinctive and marvellous way, whatever lovely arts and noble deeds are possible to them. Without it, you can do no good thing. To the grief of it, you can do many bad ones. In the possession of it, is your peace and your power.

And there is a fourth thing of which we already know too much. There is an evil spirit whose dominion is in blindness and cowardice, as the dominion of the Spirit of wisdom is in clear sight and in courage.

And this blind and cowardly spirit is forever telling you that evil things are pardonable, and you shall not die for them, and that good things are impossible, and you need not live for them; and that gospel of his is now the loudest that is preached in your Saxon tongue. You will find some day, to your cost, if you believe the first part of it, that it is not true; but you may never, if you believe the second part of it, find, to your gain, that also, untrue; and therefore, I pray you with all earnestness to prove, and know within your hearts, that all things lovely and righteous are possible for those who believe in their possibility, and who determine that, for their part, they will make every day's work contribute to them. Let every dawn of morning be to you as the beginning of life, and every setting sun be to you as its close: — then let every one of these short lives leave its record of some kindly thing done for others — some goodly strength or knowledge gained for yourselves; so, from day to day, and strength to strength, you shall build up indeed, by Art, by Thought, and by Just Will,

an Ecclesia of England, of which it shall not be said, "See what manner of stones are here," but "See what manner of men." — *Lectures on Art*, sec. 125.

Those of you who still go to chapel say every day your creed. . . . Now, you may cease to believe two articles of it, and — admitting Christianity to be true — still be forgiven. But I can tell you, you must *not* cease to believe the third!

You begin by saying that you believe in an Almighty Father. Well, you may entirely lose the sense of that Fatherhood, and yet be forgiven.

You go on to say that you believe in a Saviour Son. You may entirely lose the sense of that Sonship, and yet be forgiven.

But the third article — disbelieve if you dare! "I believe in the Holy Ghost, *the Lord and Giver of Life*."

Disbelieve that, and your own being is degraded into the state of dust driven by the wind; and the elements of dissolution have entered your very heart and soul.

All Nature with one voice, with one glory, is set to teach you reverence for the life communicated to you from the Father of Spirits. The song of birds, and their plumage; the scent of flowers, their colour, their very existence, are in direct connection with the mystery of that communicated life: and all the strength, and all the arts of men, are measured by, and founded upon, their reverence for the passion, and their guardianship of the purity of Love. — *The Eagle's Nest*, sec. 169.

NOTES.

RUSKIN THE REVEALER OF NATURE.

PAGE 30. Poetry will be found to illustrate, better than any word of comment, these prose-poems of Ruskin. Vaughan, Wordsworth, and Shelley are of closer spiritual kin to him than any prose-writer, even Thoreau or Jeffries. Of the wealth of comparative material to be found in these poets and others, only a few hints can here be offered; but the loving student, if he have leisure, can illumine almost every sentence of these selections by kindred interpretations from those "priests of Nature," the poets.

P. 32. **The Consecration.** To Wordsworth, a like solemn moment came at sunrise. See "The Prelude," Book IV., lines 320, 340. Wordsworth's account of the gradual education of his child-spirit by nature, given in the first four books of "The Prelude," should be compared with Ruskin's hints, scattered through "Præterita." Ruskin, like Wordsworth, might say of his soul, responding to the passion of nature, —

> "I was as sensitive as waters are
> To the sky's influence in a kindred mood
> Of passion: was obedient as a lute
> That waits upon the touches of the wind."

Pp. 33, 36. **Air and Clouds.** The first selection here should be minutely analyzed. Apparently a glowing outburst of sentiment, it is really a close, comprehensive, exact, scientific study; every word carries the weight of a distinct fact.

P. 36. Compare Shelley, "Lines written among the Euganean Hills."

P. 41. **Water.** Cf. Shelley's poem, "The Recollection:" —

> "We paused beside the pools that lie
> Under the forest bough;
> Each seemed as 'twere a little sky
> Gulf'd in a world below;

A firmament of purple light
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night,
And purer than the day —
In which the lovely forests grew
As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
Than any spreading there."

PAGE 41. Compare, with this passage on the Rhone, a beautiful little poem on the "Waterfall," by Henry Vaughan, a poet of the seventeenth century, who loved nature with the soul of the nineteenth. The poem begins: —

"With what deep murmurs, through Time's silent stealth,
Dost thy transparent, cool, and watery wealth
Here flowing fall,
And chide and call,
As if his liquid loose retinue stayed
Lingering, and were of this steep place afraid; —
The common pass
As clear as glass,
All must descend,
Not to an end,
But, quickened by this deep and rocky grave,
Rise to a longer course, more bright and brave."

P. 43. **Mountains.** Compare Browning, in "James Lee's Wife: " —

"Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,
This Autumn morning! How he sets his bones
To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees and feet
For the ripple to run over in its mirth."

P. 45. Compare Emerson, in "Monadnock: " —

"Hither we bring
Our insect miseries to thy rocks;
And the whole flight, with folded wing,
Vanish, and end their murmuring —
Vanish beside these dedicated blocks,
Which who can tell what mason laid? "

P. 47. **Vegetation.** This fragment is given as an instance of Ruskin's luminous power of classification.

PAGE 54. This suggestion of an almost human character in the leaves recalls Sidney Lanier, in his "Sunrise:"—

"Ye lispers, whisperers, singers in storms,
Ye consciences murmuring faiths under forms,
Ye ministers meet for each passion that grieves,
Friendly, sisterly, sweetheart leaves—
. . . . .
Teach me the terms of silence,—preach me
The passion of patience,—sift me,—impeach me,—
And there, oh there,
As ye hang with your myriad palms upturned in the air
Pray me a myriad prayer."

P. 57. **Vignettes.** These short word-pictures are introduced in order that the student may carefully analyze Ruskin's wonderful power of presenting the whole landscape—aspect and emotion—in a dozen lines. Every word deserves separate study, and will be found, as a rule, to give to the passage, not only an added beauty, but an essential truth.

P. 58. **Alpine Architecture.** Compare Arnold:—

"Hark! fast by the window
The rushing winds go,
To the ice-cumbered gorges,
The vast seas of snow!
There the torrents drive upward
Their rock-strangled hum;
There the avalanche thunders
The hoarse torrent dumb."

P. 59. **Distant Peaks.** Compare Shelley, in the "Prometheus Unbound:"—

"And far on high the keen sky-cleaving mountains,
From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling
The dawn."

P. 60. **The Breaker on the Rocks.** Of this sentence, from the "Harbours of England," Ruskin has lately told us that he is really proud! He misquotes his own words, however; his later version is: "One moment, a flint cave; the next, a marble pillar; the next, a fading cloud."

PAGE 69. **The Secret of the Mist.** This is the message so constantly and nobly reiterated to the century by Robert Browning: —

> "You must mix some uncertainty
> With faith, if you would have faith be."

P. 70. **Natural Myths.** Compare Vaughan, as he speaks of the significance nature once had for him: —

> "When yet I had not walked above
> A mile or two from my first Love,
> And looking back — at that short space —
> Could see a glimpse of His bright face: —
> When on some gilded cloud, or flower,
> My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
> And in those weaker glories spy
> Some shadows of Eternity."

Also Emerson, in his essay on Nature: — "Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. Every appearance in nature corresponds to some state of the mind, and that state of the mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its picture. . . . It is easily seen that there is nothing lucky or capricious in these analogies, but that they are constant, and pervade nature."

P. 81. **Living Nature.** This passage contains Ruskin's comments on the great evolution theory. It will be seen that, while laughing at some of its cruder phases, he is quite ready to accept some of its nobler results; but the one truth that he reiterates with constant earnestness is, that the question of method of creation is utterly subordinate to the greater questions of source of creation, and the effect of created nature upon the soul.

P. 84. This is the great conception which has always inspired mystics and poets, but which was, until our century, viewed by science as an imaginative figment. It is the glory of modern science, however, to have corroborated the synthesis of the imagination, by unfolding before us the vision of the Persistence or Unity of Force. To the eye of the scientist, this Force is not yet proved to be Life; but, to the faith of the poet, it must ever be so. Perhaps here, too, poetry will prove the precursor of science. Meanwhile, the faith in

the Life in Nature is nowhere more truthfully given than in Wordsworth's glorious and familiar lines: —

"I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."
— *Lines written above Tintern Abbey.*

RUSKIN THE CRITIC OF ART.

PAGE 94. **The Imagination.** These passages from the second volume of "Modern Painters" are of interest so great and guidance so helpful that they are introduced, although Mr. Ruskin, reprinting the volume in 1883, makes severe fun of his youthful self, and sharply criticises many details of his treatment. But the book was written, he tells us, "day after day with higher kindled feeling;" and it possesses the insight of enthusiasm.

P. 98. **The Power of Famine.** A reference to Dante's "Inferno," XXXIII. 20–90.

P. 102. **The Temper of the Artist.** All thoughtful critics agree in ascribing to genius this strange passivity. E. S. Dallas calls "unconsciousness the highest law of poetry;" his definition of poetry is, "the imaginative, harmonious, and unconscious activity of the soul."

P. 106. Compare George Eliot, in "Adam Bede," chap. xxxiii., on the beauty of a foolish woman.

P. 110. **Three Schools of Art.** Purist Idealism. In his youth this was the school of art best loved by Ruskin. See the conclusion of the second volume of "Modern Painters." But his Venetian studies taught him the power of the great Naturalists, Titian and Tintoret; and "ever since the 'Stones of Venice' was written, Titian was given in all my art teaching as a standard of perfection." See "Fors Clavigera," Letter 76, for a singularly interesting account of the effect of this change of standard on his religious attitude.

PAGE 114. Compare Browning, "Old Masters in Florence:"—

"On which I conclude, that the early painters,
To cries of 'Greek Art and what more wish you?'
Replied, 'To become now self-acquainters,
And paint man, man, whatever the issue.'"

And again, in "Fra Lippo Lippi," — a poem which is throughout a commentary on these passages from Ruskin — the truant monk quotes his critics: —

"'Give us no more of body than shows soul —
Here's Giotto, with his saint a-praising God!
That sets you praising, — why not stop with him?
Why put all thoughts of praise out of our heads
With wonder at lines, colour, and what not?
Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!'
. . . . .
Now, is this sense, I ask?
A fair way to paint soul, by painting body
So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go farther,
And can't fare worse! . . .
You've seen the world,
The beauty, and the wonder, and the power,
The shapes of things, their colours, lights and shades,
Changes, surprises, — and God made it all! —
For what? Do you feel thankful? Aye, or no?
. . . What's it all about?
To be passed o'er, despised? Or dwelt upon,
Wondered at? oh, this last, of course, you say.
But why not do as well as say, — paint these
Just as they are, careless what comes of it,
God's works — paint any one, and count it crime
To let a truth slip."

P. 115. **The Development of Landscape Art.** This long passage, much condensed, is given from an early lecture, not because it is beautiful, but because it presents a summary of the main trend and conclusions of "Modern Painters." See especially the chapters in Vol. III. on Classical, Mediæval, and Modern Landscape.

P. 117. See "The Two Paths," Lecture III., for a full discussion of conventional and decorative art.

P. 118. The whole study of the Renascence, in the third volume of the "Stones of Venice," is an amplification of this passage.

PAGE 125. In "The Iris of the Earth," Deucalion, chap. vii., Ruskin gives us a beautiful study of the rainbow hues, in their symbolism, as found in the characteristic gems of heraldry.

P. 131. In these closing passages will be found suggestions of the order of thought by which Ruskin was led to change the chief interest of his life from Art to Economics. The half-humourous caricature of the next paragraph still has its foundation of fact in the immense spread of disfiguring manufactures over the pastoral country of England.

RUSKIN THE STUDENT OF SOCIOLOGY.

P. 145. Foolish men imagine that, because judgment for an evil thing is delayed, there is no justice but an accidental one here below. Judgment for an evil thing may be delayed some day or two, some century or two, but it is sure as life, it is sure as death! In the centre of the whirlwind, verily now as in the oldest days, dwells and speaks a god. Carlyle, "Past and Present," chap. ii.

P. 146. **Arraignment.**

> "We live by admiration, hope and love,
> And even as these are well and wisely placed
> In dignity of being we ascend.
>
> WORDSWORTH, *Excursion*, Book IV.

Vehement in language, and, for Americans, somewhat exaggerated in substance, this solemn indictment of modern corruptions has, nevertheless, sufficient literal truth to commend it to thought. It still holds good to some extent on every point, unless in regard to modern conceit and self-complacency. These qualities are assuredly less marked in contemporary thought than they were when this passage was written, twenty years ago.

P. 149. **Wealth and Life.** Here, Ruskin formulates his conviction of the relation of human choice to economic law, and the effect of moral facts upon economic conditions. Compare Carlyle, "Past and Present," Book I., chaps. i. and ii.: — "We can spend thousands where we once spent hundreds, but can purchase nothing good with them. In poor and rich, instead of noble thrift and plenty, there is idle luxury alternating with mean scarcity and inability. We have sumptuous garnitures for our Life, but have forgotten to *live* in the midst of them. It is enchanted wealth; no man of us can yet touch it. . . .

To whom, then, is this wealth of England wealth? Who is it that it blesses? As yet no one. We have more riches than any nation ever had before; we have less good of them than any nation ever had before. . . ."

P. 155. **The State and the Workman.** Here is the best defence and explanation Ruskin offers of his much-attacked dislike of steam machinery. It will be seen that there is a certain principle underlying his eccentricity. His disbelief in railroads and steam has, however, been exaggerated, largely because of his whimsical methods of expression. He tells us in all soberness that he would use steam-power for reclaiming waste-lands and doing work on a vast scale where human force is insufficient. He would abolish "most of the railroads in England and all in Wales;" but he explains that he would retain lines of railroad (run by government) between great centres, while not permitting them to deface the beautiful scenery of the world. (See Letters on the Management of Railways in the collection entitled "On the Old Road.") His own use of railroads he defends by asserting that, were the devil himself at his elbow, he should utilize him as a local black!

P. 159. This plea for government employment for the unemployed sounded strange indeed when first made by Ruskin. Carlyle, in "Past and Present," Book IV., chaps. iv. and v., and in Latter Day Pamphlets, "The Present Time," makes the same plea, with much caution and the proud assurance of being greeted with derision. He puts it into the mouth of his hypothetic and ideal Prime Minister; but as soon as that worthy deigns to pronounce the revolutionary words "Organization of Labour," his horrified audience desert him in a body, and he is "'left speaking,' says the reporter." Now, this demand for State control of labour is growing yearly in weight, and in some details is already met.

P. 161. **Fallacies.** This idea, that it does not matter for what purposes money is spent, since it must encourage some industry or other, is entertained, strangely enough, by many excellent and intelligent people. Kingsley, in the thirty-ninth chapter of "Alton Locke," discusses and demolishes it as completely as Ruskin does here.

P. 169. **Justice and Equality.** It will be obvious from these passages how deeply Ruskin believes in the necessity of just and varying rewards for honest labour.

PAGE 175. Elsewhere, Ruskin, acknowledging the degrading influence of certain forms of necessary work, proposes that ardent young High-Churchmen, instead of turning curates, should prove the reality of their desire for self-immolation by becoming butchers and greengrocers.

P. 178. **Prospect and Present Duty.** Carlyle says, to the individual, "Thou, there, the thing for thee to do is, if possible, to cease to be a hollow sounding-shell of hearsays, egoisms, purblind dilettanteisms; and become, were it on the infinitely small scale, a faithful, discerning soul. . . . O brother, we must, if possible, resuscitate some soul and conscience in us. Exchange . . . our dead hearts of stone for living hearts of flesh. Then shall we discern, not one thing, but in clearer or dimmer sequence, a whole endless host of things that can be done. *Do* the first of these; do.it; the second will already have become clearer, doabler."

P. 179. "There will a radical, universal alteration of your regimen and way of life take place; there will a most agonizing divorce between you and your chimeras, luxuries, and falsities take place; a most toilsome, all-but 'impossible' return to Nature and her veracities and integrities take place; that so the inner fountains of life may again begin, like eternal Light-fountains to irradiate and purify your bloated, swollen, foul existence, drawing nigh, as at present, to nameless death." — *Past and Present*, Book I., chap. iv.

It will be noticed how much more tender and more Christian is the tone of Ruskin than the tone of Carlyle.

P. 182. **The Merchant Chivalry.** "The Leaders of Industry, if Industry is ever to be led, are virtually the Captains of the World; if there is no nobleness in them, there will never be an Aristocracy more. . . . Let the Captains of Industry retire into their own hearts, and ask solemnly, If there is nothing but vulturous hunger for fine wines, valet reputation, and gilt carriages discoverable there? Of hearts made by the Almighty God, I will not believe such a thing." — *Past and Present*, Book IV., chap. iv.

P. 189. **St. George's Guild.** Mr. Ruskin says that, although the Creed of St. George is to be broad enough to include all God-fearing persons, the *laws* are to be distinctively Christian.

P. 191. **The Project.** This beautiful modern vision of the Ideal State should be carefully compared with More's "Utopia," Bacon's "New Atlantis," and Campanella's "City of the Sun." It is interest-

ing to note that, while in every century men of letters have delighted themselves with dreams of social perfection, it is only the man of the nineteenth century who tries to transmute his ideal into practical reality. The partial failure of Mr. Ruskin's noble effort does not alter the significance of the fact that the effort should have been made. The twentieth century may accomplish that translation of ideal into real which it is the glory of our century to have attempted.

PAGE 192. This idea of the education of boys is, in some respects,— notably in the emphasis placed on physical training, — much like that of Milton. Milton plans for boys to become hunters, fowlers, fishers, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries, architects, mariners, engineers, anatomists. They are to practise fencing and wrestling and military tactics; they are to gain familiarity with the resources of their own country; further, they are to know the great Latin and Greek authors; and, as they grow older, to study the sciences, geography, ancient and modern, agriculture (as taught by Latin authors), botany, zoölogy, and elementary medicine. Advanced students are to become familiar with ethics, classical and Biblical, with economics, and with the great modern literatures.

Ruskin's ideas also owe something to the old Persian method, by which noble youths were taught "to ride and speak the truth."

"We once," says Ruskin, "taught our youths to write Latin verses, and called them educated; now we teach them to leap and to row, to hit a ball with a bat, and call them educated."

Mr. Ruskin, before his illness, was planning to write for St. George's schools, "Studies in the History of Christendom, for Boys and Girls who have been held at its Fonts." "The Bible of Amiens" was the only portion completed.

In this idea of memorial song night and morning, Mr. Ruskin, curiously enough, reproduces the plan of the great Frenchman, Auguste Comte, whom he cordially dislikes.

P. 195. This concluding passage may serve, indeed, as a summary of the essential phases, critical and constructive, of Mr. Ruskin's social theories. For his conception of the duty and office of the clergy, see "Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds," the lecture on Kings' Treasuries in "Sesame and Lilies," and Letter XIII. in "Time and Tide."

RUSKIN THE TEACHER OF ETHICS.

PAGE 198. "I've stubbed Thurnaby Waäste," are the proud words of Tennyson's old Northern Farmer — a man after Ruskin's own heart — reviewing his past life on his deathbed: —

> "Dubbut looke at the waäste: theer warn't not feead for a cow;
> Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzy, an' looke at it now —
> Warnt worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lot's o' feead,
> Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it doon i' seead."

P. 201. A reference to the "Phædrus" of Plato: — "Let us say that the soul resembles the combined efficacy of a pair of winged steeds and a charioteer. . . . Of these horses he [the charioteer] finds one generous and of generous breed, the other of opposite descent and opposite character. And thus it necessarily follows that driving in our case is no easy or agreeable work; . . . for they [the chariots] are burdened by the horse of vicious temper, which sways and sinks them towards the earth, if haply he has no good training from his charioteer. Whereupon there awaits the soul a crowning pain and agony. For . . . that [soul] which follows a god most closely, and resembles him most nearly, succeeds in raising the head of its charioteer into the outer region, and is carried round with the immortals in their revolution, though sorely encumbered by its horses, and barely able to contemplate the real existences; while another rises and sinks by turns, his horses plunging so violently that he can discern no more than a part of these existences. But the common herd follow at a distance, all of them, indeed, burning with desire for the upper world; but, failing to reach it, they make the revolution in the moisture of the lower element, trampling on one another, and striking against one another, in their efforts to rush one before the other. Hence ensues the extremest turmoil and struggling and sweating; and herein, by the awkwardness of the drivers, many souls are maimed, and many lose many feathers in the crush; and all after painful labour go away without being blessed by admission to the spectacle of truth, and thenceforth live on the food of mere opinion. . . . I divided every soul into three parts, two of them resembling horses, and the third a charioteer. . . . That horse of the two which occupies the nobler rank is in form erect and firmly knit, high-necked, hook-nosed, white-colored, black-eyed; he loves honour with temperance and modesty,

and, a votary of genuine glory, he is driven, without stroke of the whip, by voice and reason alone. The bad horse, on the other hand, is crooked, balky, clumsily put together, with thick neck, short throat, flat face, black coat, gray and bloodshot eyes, a friend to all riot and insolence, shaggy about the ears, dull of hearing, scarce yielding to lash and goad united. Whenever, therefore, the driver sees the sight which inspires love, . . . the obedient horse, yielding then as ever to the check of shame, restrains himself; . . . but the other pays heed no longer to his driver's goad or lash, but struggles on with unruly bounds, and doing all violence to his yoke-fellow and master. . . . And when he is recovered from the pain which the bit inflicted, and has with difficulty regained his breath, [he] breaks out into railing at his master and his comrade for their treacherous cowardice; . . . he stoops his head and gets the bit between his teeth, and drags them on incontinently. But the driver experiences the same sensation as at first; backward he falls like racers at the barrier, and, with a wrench still more violent than before, pulls back the bit from between the teeth of the riotous horse, thereby drenching his jaws and railing tongue with blood, and bruising against the ground his legs and haunches, consigns him to anguish. But as soon as, by this treatment oft repeated, the evil horse is recovered from his vice; he follows with humbled steps the guidance of his driver, and at the sight of the fair one is consumed with terror. So that then, and not till then, does it happen that the soul of the lover follows his beloved with reverence and awe."—*Phædrus*, PLATO, Wright's Translation.

PAGE 202. The "Wrath of Achilles," with which the Iliad opens, was caused by the injustice whereby the hero had been robbed of his fair captive. So Æneas exclaims in conflict that he is but the instrument of the righteous anger of Pallas.

P. 204. "This your fair city" is, of course, Oxford, to whose students this lecture was delivered.

P. 205. "*Qui non accepit*," Ps. xxiv. 4, to the end of the passage. This selection illustrates Ruskin's beautiful and half-instinctive use of the Bible.

P. 208. Compare Carlyle: "Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out, the right path, and to walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for; and then, by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same! That is his true

blessedness, honour, 'liberty,' and maximum of well-being: if liberty be not that, I for one have small care about liberty. . . . Liberty requires new definitions."—*Past and Present*, Book III., ch. xiii.

In Lecture VIII. of "Val d'Arno," Ruskin gives some beautiful hints concerning his ideas of true liberty or "franchise."

PAGE 220. "Let Alone," or "Laisser Aller," is the great watchword of the Manchester school of economics and politics. Its chief exponent to-day is Herbert Spencer.

P. 220. Compare Browning:—

> "Rejoice that man is hurled
> From change to change unceasingly,
> His soul's wings never furled."

P. 233. "Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony the instant he sets himself to work! . . . Blessed is he who has found his work: let him ask no other blessedness. . . . Labour is life; from the inmost heart of the worker rises his God-given force, the sacred, celestial life essence breathed into him by Almighty God."—*Past and Present*, Book III., chap. xi.

P. 235. A reference to the Famine of Orissa (a province of India) that occurred in 1866. "During the thirty-five years, from 1831–1832 to 1866–1867, Government had to remit £257,939 of its Orissa rental for droughts alone, or £455,365 for the combined effects of droughts and floods. . . . In 1770, ten million peasants suffered the last agonies of hunger, and one-third of all Bengal lay waste and silent for twenty years. . . . In 1866 the same province suffered a famine equally severe; but our modern facilities of intercommunication, and liberal, though tardy application of money, reduced the mortality to less than one-tenth of what it was in 1770, and only seven hundred and fifty thousand British subjects died of starvation. One-fourth of the whole population of Orissa was, however, swept away."—*Orissa*, by W. W. HUNTER, London, 1872.

P. 241. The modern movement for improved tenements for the poor shows that men have at least begun to realize their responsibilities and their powers in this matter.

P. 243. Ruskin says that the gist of all his teaching is to be found in this passage, from the words "The work of men—and what is that?"

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